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IMPARTIAL AND SUCCINCT

HISTORY

True declaration OF THE *Revival*
REVIVAL AND PROGRESS

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST;

With a new edition FROM THE
REFORMATION

TO THE

PRESENT TIME.

WITH

FAITHFUL CHARACTERS OF THE PRINCIPAL
PERSONAGES.

BY THE

REV. T. HAWES, LL. B. & M. D.

Chaplain to the late Countess of Huntingdon, and Rector of All-Saints, Aldwinchley,
Northamptonshire.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED

APPENDIX No. III.

CONTAINING

MEMOIRS of the Leadings of Divine Providence in the call of Capt. JAMES WIL-
SON to the work of conducting the South Sea Mission, by the same hand.

The whole taken from the larger work of the Doctor, in three
volumes, lately published in England.

WORCESTER, (MASSACHUSETTS.)

PRINTED BY DANIEL GREENLEAF.

1803.

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P R E F A C E

OF THE *AUTHOR*,

PREFIXED *to the SECOND VOLUME.*

THE great design of the adorable Redeemer when he came down from Heaven, was to procure peace upon earth, and good-will towards men: To correspond with this desirable and blessed purpose is the great end and object of this History ; particularly, amidst the various denominations into which the Christian world is divided, to unite in one holy bond of love, all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, without any consideration of the country they may occupy, the forms of church government they have embraced, or the unsentential differences in religious opinions, which, through the present infirmity of intellect, or the prejudices of education, they have imbibed. The true Church has but one head, even Christ ; and we are all members one of another. It will be a better proof of our genuine Christianity, infinitely more conduce to the spread of the Gospel, and tend unspeakably more to the edification of our own souls, to love one another out of a pure heart fervently, and to bear and forbear with each other in subordinate matters, than to contend for systems, or exclusive establishments.

It is impossible to doubt the excellence, to dispute the ability, to question the learning, or impeach the purity of many, who have demonstrated the genuineness of their faith and hope under all our different modes of

religious profession, the Papists themselves not excepted. And if the great Head of the Church will not exclude them from his kingdom and glory, and we are bound to hope that we shall meet, and be joined together in one holy fellowship through a blessed eternity, how powerfully does this call upon us to cultivate a greater enlargement of heart towards all the holy brethren ! We leave to bigots, and the unblest, to execrate, excommunicate, and unchristianize every man that gathers not with them, and dares to differ a hair's breadth from their dogmas or decisions. But if the spirit of love and of a sound mind, has truly taken possession of our bosoms, we shall feel too much of the blessedness of the temper itself to suffer unhallowed encroachments thereon. We shall watch every avenue of the heart, at which bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamour, and evil speaking would enter, to disturb the repose of our own souls, and to trouble our brethren ; and shall exemplify the character of the elect of God, holy, and beloved, by putting on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering. These will always carry irresistible evidence to the conscience, that we have been truly baptised into Christ, and have put on Christ. Whilst if any man hath not *this spirit of Christ*, whatever else he may conceit he possesses, assuredly HE IS NONE OF HIS. It is my wish and prayer therefore whilst the truth is to be sought with impartiality, that the heart may be enlarged in charity, and ennobled with love, without dissimulation ; for if we have the head and tongue of men or of angels, and have not this divine temper in exercise, we should be but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. These are truths which can never be too deeply impressed on the conscience, and inculcated by all who are true Churchmen. And I pray God, that whoever reads the

following pages may grow more into this disposition, and look up to Him who giveth man knowledge, that every fresh acquirement may be accompanied with an equal measure of fidelity, devotedness and love to God our Saviour, and to every soul redeemed by his most precious blood, whether in circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free.



P R E F A C E.

OF THE *EDITOR*.

THE liberty which has been taken, in causing to be reprinted in this Country that part of Dr. HAWKES' CHURCH HISTORY, which is contained in this Volume, it is hoped, will not be thought any infringement of the established laws of decorum. It was the design of the Doctor to search out, and present to the view of his Readers the real spiritual Church of Christ, wherever she was to be found, and in whatever circumstances placed. This is an interesting object, to which no sincere Christian can be indifferent. To extend an acquaintance with this work, by furnishing new and cheap impressions of it, or any part of it, cannot be repugnant to the pious aims of the Author. The Doctor has divided his History of the Church into three Periods. The first extends from the birth of Christ to

Theodosius the Great. The second, from the establishment of Christianity, as the exclusive religion of the Empire under Theodosius, to the commencement of the Reformation. The third, from the commencement of the Reformation to the present time. It is that part of the History which embraces the last of these periods only, which is presented in this volume. This period is covered with the least obscurity, is highly eventful, and to us is peculiarly interesting. The inquisitive Christian will here find much to gratify his curiosity, strengthen his faith in divine promises, and quicken his zeal for the advancement of a kingdom, which is to survive the wreck of earthly empires, the funeral of nature, and the final destruction of all its enemies. To judge candidly of many of the Author's comments he must place himself in his situation. Sects and characters often assume a varied appearance, as the station of observation is changed. Had the writer been an American, possibly his remarks respecting some denominations of professing Christians, and particularly of the Wesleyan Methodists would not have been quite so liberal. If any of the notes be thought impertinent or useless, the fault must be laid wholly to the account of the Editor of this volume.

SAMUEL AUSTIN.

WORCESTER, *July 30th*, 1803.

PERIOD III.

CENTURY XVI.



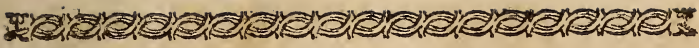
THE HAPPY REVIVAL OF

EVANGELICAL RELIGION,

FROM THE

REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.






PERIOD III.

CENTURY XVI.

CHAP. I.

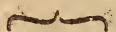
ON THE OUTWARD CHURCH.

FTER toiling through a long dismal night of papal darkness, and regions of the shadow of death; a beam of gospel day, as the morning spread upon the mountains, revives the fainting spirit.

AN. 1503—1516. The savage BORGIA, the mad warrior, JULIUS, and the Epicurean LEO,* sat in succession enthroned amidst all their insolence and abuses; and trampling on the prostrate world, defied their enemies, despised their impotence, and gloried in the stability of an empire confirmed by ages of superstition, and strengthened by legions of monks and clergy; whose terrors overawed the consciences of mankind.

* Popes, who successively sat on the papal throne during this period. The first, under the assumed name of Pius III. held the pontificate but about a month. Of the second, Julius II. the accurate Mosheim in his Ec. Hist. gives the following character. "To the odious list of vices with which JULIUS II. dishonored the pontificate, we may add the most savage ferocity, the most audacious arrogance, the most despotic vehemence of temper, and the most extravagant frenetic passion for war and bloodshed. His whole pontificate was one continual scene of military tumult; nor did

Not that the world was quite insensible of the chains in which they were held—many a sovereign complained of the encroachments of pontifical ambition; numerous writers attacked the flagrant abuses of the Church; sometimes with the strong arms of reasoning, and sometimes with the keen shafts of ridicule, for which the follies of monkery furnished an ample scope. Not a nation but uttered its groans under the papal exactions, impoverished to supply the rapine, the luxury, and the ambitious projects of the Roman prelates. Unmoved and tranquil, the omnipotent pontiffs looked down from their high and lofty throne on the suppliant herd, treated their murmurs with disdain, and their requests for reformation with inattention: sufficiently armed to punish the refractory, and having every engine of preferment and wealth, to gain the mercenary, to silence the troublesome, and to increase the number of their zealous partisans. Canon law, long prescription, and the reverence consecrated by the character assumed and universally admitted, of being *Christ's vicegerent upon earth*, surrounded the papacy with an apparently impenetrable barrier. The mighty pontiffs sat secure in the exercise of unlimited power, and knew, that whatever redress was sought, must come through their own hands,



he suffer Europe to enjoy a moment's tranquility as long as he lived. We may easily imagine the miserable condition of the Church under a vicar of Christ, who lived in camps amidst the din of arms, who was ambitious of no other fame than that which arose from battles won and cities laid desolate." See Mosheims Eccles. Hist. Vol. 4. page 10.

The last, Leo X. succeeded JULIUS in the year 1513. Under his pontificate the Reformation began. He was of the family of Medicis, a man of pleasure and totally indifferent to the interests of religion.

be courted as a favor, and granted under such conditions as they were pleased to dictate.

A feeble attempt to form a general council at Pisa, by Lewis of France, and Maximilian the Emperor, only tended to shew the weakness of opposition, and the impotence of all efforts to reform. The Pope, in the most insulting manner annulled their decrees, and dissolved their assembly; treating them with equal contempt and arrogance.

Leo X. a man of letters, and a man of pleasure, who succeeded the imperious Julius, and presided at the Lateran council, which his predecessor had assembled, not only took care, that not a hair of abuse should be touched, but prevailed on Francis the First to sacrifice the Gallican liberties, by substituting in place of the *pragmatic sanction*,* a new agreement, called the *Concordate*, abhorred alike by the French people and clergy. So supreme was the papal dominion over that nation, which had most stoutly resisted its usurpations.

The amazing prodigality, luxury, and magnificence of Leo, began however to exhaust the Church's coffers; and as money must be procured to supply his extravagances, the never-failing resource of indulgences was resorted to, as the most effectual means of levying a tribute upon the whole Christian world, under the specious guise of conferring the most important spiritual benefits.

* The Pragmatic Sanction was an Edict, published by Lewis XI. King of France, for the purpose of restraining the encroachments of papal power, particularly in regard to filling vacancies in bishoprics and priories. The Concordate was an agreement between the Pope Leo X. and Francis, by which the right of election to supply these vacancies ceased to be popular, and was vested exclusively in the Crown.

The profligate examples of so many vicegerents of Christ, could not but have the direst effects on the clergy, whom they supported in their abuses, and were reciprocally supported by them. An incredible dissolution of manners followed the loss of all divine principle. Leo X. himself appears to have been an Infidel, if not an Atheist, to which his learning did not a little contribute. When the heart is enslaved by corruption, the more ingenious and scientific a man is, the readier will he be to find arguments to quiet his conscience, and to soothe it in the pursuits which he resolves not to abandon. His sacerdotal legions were not unfaithful followers of their leader ; and as the Church and Monasteries wallowed in wealth, they failed not to use their affluence in procuring for themselves every gratification ; whilst the best informed could not but laugh at the superstitious piety which had furnished them with the means of indulgence, and enjoy the delusion of the Christian world.

As every preferment at Rome was venal,* the rich, the licentious, and the profligate, would naturally be the first purchasers ; and the highest offices devolved upon the basest, and most unworthy.

The immensity of the mendicant tribes grew into a burden, which the Christian world could with difficulty support ; and, as every art and device was practised to procure veneration for their several orders, and to fleece the public more abundantly, the most scandalous deceptions were employed, and the grossest frauds attempted, to impose on the credulity of mankind. Sometimes

* “ *Omnia venalia Romæ*” said Jugurtha after having visited that city. Melancholy that Christian Rome should be the subject of the same imputation.

they were detected and punished, as in the case of the infamous Dominican. *Jetzer* ; but oftener the trick succeeded, and the foolish people cried, " A MIRACLE."

As the Dominicans and Franciscans had chiefly usurped dominion in the schools and universities, theological knowledge was sunk into quotations from the fathers, or disputes about points of the most trivial import, delivered in all the jargon of scholastic philosophy. And though science revived in a number of literati, such as Erasmus, Agrippa, and others, who, renouncing the subtleties of Aristotle and Plato, with the barren erudition of the dialectics, read and thought for themselves ; yet, the current of education still flowed through these polluted channels, and left the miserable pupils groping for the wall as blind ; burdening their memories with terms, definitions, and distinctions, which communicated nothing of real knowledge, but abundance of conceit and dispute.

The ministry of the pure word of God was no longer to be found. The very semblance of it would have been branded as heresy : all pulpits were occupied with penegyrics on the saints ; the transcendent glories and power of the Virgin ; the efficacy of relics for the expulsion of demons from the possessed ; and the cure of all diseases of body and mind ; the virtues of those of the neighboring Church or convent, were sure to be peculiarly insisted upon. The fire of purgatory afforded an inexhaustible fund of the terrific ; and the safety of indulgences was displayed in the most moving strains of plaintive eloquence : whilst *good works* were enforced with all their meritorious efficacy, and the building a church, or a convent, or some rich endowment of them, cancelled every crime, and infallibly secured salvation. But, above all, the honor of the clergy, the sanctity of the

Church, her unity, and visibility in one head, and unlimited submission to his decrees: *this* was taught as the perfection of Christian excellence; as it was the depth of heretical pravity, and sure to be followed with the destruction of body and soul in hell, to doubt of one of the dogmas of Rome, or to withdraw a tithe of obedience from the holy see and its pontiffs.

The miserable people bound in chains of ignorance and superstition, submitted to be priest-ridden with the most exemplary patience. And whilst they were amused with the raree show of the *mass* and *processions*, and *mysteries*, gloried in the purity of the Catholic faith, and were led to entertain with sacred horror the idea of any alteration in the Church. The clergy fostered with all their art, an ignorance so favorable to their empire, and carefully watched over every attempt to enlighten the minds of the people with gospel truth, or to correct their manners by divine principles. The more profligate they were, the more they needed absolution, and must recur to their ghostly guides for peace and pardon. Thus the Church reaped the richest harvest from the purchase of her indulgences, as the universal immorality of mankind made them more necessary for the various culprits.

But as the darkest moment of the night precedes the dawn of day, when the Church appeared in the most desperate situation, her deliverance was approaching from this worse than Babylonish captivity. We have seen, during the preceding ages, here and there a spark struck from the Scriptures of truth, that gave a momentary gleam. And though the inquisition, with all its terrors, and the slavish submission of the monarchs of Christendom, seemed to uphold the pillars of the Roman see with Atlantean shoulders, the utter rottenness of the

foundation awaited only a bold resolute hand to make the mighty fabric totter. Indeed, the silent and unnoticed dispensations of God had been preparing for the event, however to human view unexpected and judged impossible. A variety of attempts at reformation had been made ; and though generally suppressed, the spirit of opposition remained. Wickliffites, Albigenes, and all the persecuted, hid their heads from the thunders, which they were unable to resist ; but they waited the auspicious moment, and only sought for the intrepid leader, and the opportunity to burst their bonds asunder. The glaringness of the abuses was secretly deplored by multitudes, who, without any purpose of change in the ecclesiastical government, sighed for salutary reform. The diffusion of knowledge, through the art of printing, removed the veil which had been spread over all people. The Scriptures themselves were not so inaccessible as before, and many dared to read and think for themselves. The governors of the world, without any intention of separating themselves from the unity of the Church, were not at all indisposed to hear of plans of reformation, which might prevent their kingdoms from becoming the prey of the Roman pontiffs and their legates ; and therefore were in no haste to suppress the zeal of those reforming preachers, whom they supposed themselves always able to controul : whilst the pride and security of the papal throne too much despised the meanness of its opponents, and the feebleness of their resources.

AN. 1513. Such was the state of Christendom, when the increasing wants and rapaciousness of the Roman see made it necessary to attempt replenishing her coffers ; and fresh orders were issued to the legates every where, to find the best qualified instruments, to preach and dis-

pense the rich indulgences, which Leo X. in his great munificence, was disposed to grant to all Christian people, who had money to purchase them, for all sins, past, present, and to come. All the mendicant monks were invited to undertake this lucrative commission, and the Dominicans engaged in it with peculiar zeal and activity. As the legates were only careful about the end; how to get the most money, and little scrupulous about the means, provided they led to this object, they selected for this service instruments, the best calculated to impose upon the credulity of the vulgar; men of popular talents, unblushing effrontery, and perfect devotedness to the Romish see. Among these the Archbishop of Mentz found the famous monk, John Tetzel: whose craft equalling his impudence, he undertook the task with wonderful alacrity and success, and exalted the value of the favors which he was dispersing with an eloquence, and exaggerated commendations of the efficacy of his indulgences, that could not but produce among the superstitious multitude innumerable customers. He blazoned the virtues of the saints in colors of the most transcendent glory; vaunted the rich treasures of merit, now open from the Church's repository; of which the keys were to HIM entrusted. He could exceed all wants; supply all deficiencies; and cancel all crimes. He boasted his ability to save even the ravisher of the blessed Virgin herself; and affirmed, that HE, *John Tetzel*, had rescued more souls from hell and purgatory, by these compleat nostrums of indulgences, than ever St. Peter himself had converted to Christianity by his preaching. The gaping crowd heard with wonder this matchless knight of the golden key, and sent up their money to the stage, to purchase with avidity these precious packets of ecclesiastical panaceas, which were to set their consciences at rest forever.

An inconsiderable monk at Wittemberg heard with indignation these hyperbolical pretensions. He belonged to the Augustin order; and for his learning and talents, had been raised to the professorship of divinity, in the academy of that city, by Frederic, Elector of Saxony. MARTIN LUTHER, a name forever to be revered by every real Christian, resolved to check this impudent mountebank in his career; and not to suffer him in the city, where *he* held the divinity chair, to propagate blasphemies; so opposite to all revealed truth, without rebuke. He therefore challenged him in ninety five propositions, to defend himself and his pontifical employers, whom Luther dared to censure as accomplices, for suffering such impostures, and countenancing such abominable frauds and impositions on the people. An. 1517.

Thus was the gauntlet thrown down, and the first blow struck of that battle, which hath continued to rage ever since, and, after so many turns and changes, appears ready to be decided in the final subversion of papal tyranny, reduced now that I am writing to the dust of contempt, and approaching, I hope, its utter extinction.

Never was a man more formed for the contest in which he was engaged with the see of Rome, than this brave Saxon. His faculties were singularly great; his memory prodigious; his mind fraught with the richest stores of ancient wisdom and literature, to which he had addicted himself; but above all he was deeply read in the oracles of God, and conversant with the best of the fathers and their writings, particularly St. Augustin, the patron of his order. His natural temper, was strong and irascible; his courage invincible; his eloquence pow-

erful as his voice ; and darting the lightning of his arguments on his confounded opponents. No dangers intimidated him ; no difficulties, trials or emergencies deprived him of self-possession ; in perseverance unshaken, in labors indefatigable. Rome knew not the Hercules in the cradle, that was ready to strangle her snakes, and at first despised such impotent efforts. Nor did he himself know his own strength, or suspect, or intend the consequences, which would result from this small commencement. But if God will work none can let it ; and any instrument is sufficient, though it were but the jaw-bone of an ass, when the Spirit of the Lord comes upon the appointed Sampson. Yet, though God works according to the counsels of his own will, we see how wonderfully he provides and qualifies the proper subjects for their peculiar services ; and albeit, the success is wholly from himself, we cannot but admire the instruments he employs.

Malignity and hatred of gospel truth, have not only suggested to popish adversaries, but to more respected protestant, though infidel historians, that Luther, in his opposition to Tetzels, was animated not by zeal for truth, but mean envy for the glory of his order, neglected by preference of the Dominicans. Even admitting the charge, the providence of God, in over-ruling human evil for purposes of his own glory, would not be the less adorable ; but the facts are false upon which such charges have been founded ; nor did Luther's most envenomed enemies dare reproach him in that day, with this degrading suggestion.

Indeed the matter admitted of an easy temperament, had it been merely a dispute kindled by ambition, between individuals, or their orders. Leo might have healed the breach by the slightest concessions or modi-

fication ; for Luther disputed not the power of the Pontiff to absolve from all church punishments ; and only urged that final salvation was attainable by the merits of Christ alone, and *the penance performed by the offender* : so dark at first were his own views of acceptance with God ; but the matter was of the Lord, and therefore not slightly to be healed. The insolent security of the pontiff led him to neglect the extinguishing of the first spark ; and when dispute had blown that spark into a flame, all the deluge of waters from the mouth of the dragon became unable to quench the conflagration.

This was the age of dispute and violence. The propositions maintained at Wittemberg, not only offended Tetzels, but his order, and all the furious partizans of Rome. A host rushed into the battle to bear down the despised monk of Saxony, with their eloquence, their arguments, and church authority. Prierio, Hoogstraet, Eckius, zealous Romanists, with many others, displayed their zeal for the Catholic faith, and their abhorrence of its impugner : whom they humbly prayed the Pope to commit to the flames, and silence his blasphemies against authority. But Luther was neither a man to be intimidated by threatening, or to be borne down by the violence of these envenomed disputants. He hurled back upon them the thunders they darted at him ; refuted their arguments, and treated their persons with sovereign contempt. Yet to the Pope he held the most respectful language, as a dutiful son, and as advancing nothing which he would not retract the moment he was convinced of its contrariety to the Catholic faith.

Whether the Pope thought this one of the many nonsensical quarrels, which would die away of themselves as others had done before ; or that it was beneath his dignity to pay attention to so inconsiderable an individual ;

no reply was made to Luther's letters ; and Leo was only roused from his security, by the information received from the Emperor Maximilian, that all Germany was in a flame ; and that something must be done to suppress it without delay.

Teazed with these remonstrances, the indignant pontiff quitted the couch of indolence, to order to his presence the impertinent reformer. But Luther, who knew the court of Rome too well to trust himself in her clutches, prevailed on the Elector of Saxony, who favored him and his opinions, to apply to the Pope for the decision of the cause in Germany, before the proper tribunal, where it had originated. Leo, unwilling to offend a man of whose influence he might stand in need, consented to refer the matter to his legate CAJETAN, at Augsburgh, than whom he could not have chosen a more improper umpire ; a Dominican ; the declared friend of Tetzels ; and the enemy of Luther. Before him however the intrepid monk pleaded his cause, and, as might be expected, instead of being heard with candor, and answered with temper, the legate, with the tone of insolent authority, commanded him to abjure his opinions as erroneous, and submit humbly to the penance that should be enjoined him by the holy see.

The high spirit of the reformer was not at all disposed to submit to such arrogant dictates ; and convinced how fruitless it was to reason, and, how dangerous to resist, he silently decamped from Augsburgh, and took refuge in Saxony ; lodging his appeal with Leo, when he should be better informed of the merits of the controversy.

To silence this vexatious dispute, Leo issued his decree, commanding universal submission to the authority

of Rome, as capable alike of delivering her subjects *from all punishment whatever, whether in this world or that which is to come*; and therefore forbidding this article of faith to be ever more brought into contest.—Luther had therefore now only to submit, do penance, or appeal to a higher tribunal. He chose the latter, and referred himself and his cause to the next general council.

The Pope, too late perceived the error of appointing Cajetan as umpire, and determined to heal, if possible, a dispute which threatened to produce perilous consequences. He sent, therefore, a new legate into Saxony, MILTITZ, a man admirably calculated to repair the breach by his dexterity and his gentleness; and being a Saxon knight, he could not but be particularly acceptable to the elector and his chaplain. By him Leo sent the consecrated golden rose to Frederic, the peculiar mark of his regard; and Miltitz softening down the rigid temper of the reformer by complaisance, engaged him to write a submissive letter to the Pope, from whom he received a most condescending epistle in return. The strongest hopes were now entertained, that the matter would end to the satisfaction of the Roman see, and this rebellion be quelled, as easily as the former ones: but God had in mercy otherwise ordained.

Luther whose views had not yet probably reached to any extended reformation, and who would have been well satisfied with the removal of the grosser abuses of *indulgences*, was so won upon by the frankness and kind treatment of Miltitz and Leo; that he consented to be silent on the subject in dispute, if his adversaries were obliged to the same: and he offered to write a general circular letter to all whom he could influence, reverentially to obey the Church of Rome. So near to an ac-

commodation were matters brought through the prudence of Miltitz ; when the fury of bigotry happily precluded all reconciliation. AN. 1519.

Eckius, the partizan of Rome, had challenged Carlostadt, the faithful colleague of Luther, to dispute at Leipsic, on the deep subject of *free-will*. The day was fixed ; the combatants sharpened their weapons of controversy ; the champions advanced to the field of battle : the university, and a splendid auditory attended the solemn decision, *respecting the powers and freedom of the human will*. Luther appeared as second to his friend.

Carlostadt maintained that since the fall, we had no ability for good, but what was derived from divine grace. Eckius asserted a native power of self-determining volition, to concur with, or resist the divine operations.—The one was the advocate for the *sovereignty and efficacy of grace*, the other for the *power and merit of man in his co-operation*.

A second conflict followed between Eckius and Luther, *on the authority of the Roman see over the consciences of men*. And as was the custom of the times, the dispute was sharp, and leading to dangerous positions. Eckius, once the intimate friend, now became the implacable adversary of Luther, and sought to blacken him by every imputation of heretical pravity. Hoffman, the rector of the university, and the moderator of the disputes, dared not decide on these difficult subjects and dangerous enquiries. It became a drawn battle ; so both parties retired from the contest with most determined adherence to their own opinion, and pretended triumph over their adversaries ; and abundantly more distant from, and embittered against each other than when they began.

The amiable and gentle Melancthon was among the auditors of this renowned dispute. He had before approved of Luther's scriptural mode of treating theological subjects, and this great conflict confirmed him in the rectitude of the positions, which Luther maintained. Forever afterwards he ranked on the side of the reformers ; though his yielding temper, his love of peace, and some educational prejudices respecting church unity and schism, led him sometimes into concessions injurious to the cause which he defended. Naturally of a timorous spirit, he dreaded the consequences of division : but in an hour of danger no man looked death in the face with greater inrepidity. He was a character more suited to a peaceable state of the Church, than to bustle and contend in the days of difficulty and turbulence.

As noble a monument of faithfulness in the cause of God and truth had already sprung up in Switzerland, ZUINGLIUS. Though not alike famed with the German reformer, he may justly rank his equal in piety, in learning his superior. He had from early youth been shocked at the established superstitions around him, and having devoted himself to the Church, he began before Luther, to explain the scriptures to the people, and to censure with great fidelity, though with becoming temper, the errors of the church of Rome. His scientific attainments and holy conversation commanded the distinguishing respect of his countrymen, and he was early advanced to a stall in the church of Zurich, where his example was as eminently good as his abilities and labors were confessedly great. The very causes which roused the zeal of Luther, acted upon him in a similar way, and on the like occasion. An impudent Italian was carrying on the same shameful traffic of indulgences, and met with as warm an opposer in Zuinglius, as Tet-

zel had found in Luther. Nor was he a man of a less intrepid spirit, though tempered with greater self-command, and in point of extensive knowledge, as it appears by his works pre-eminent. To him Switzerland was chiefly indebted for the light of the gospel; and his vigorous exhortations engaged the magistracy to cast off the yoke of Rome, and assert their liberty.

While thus the holy flame was kindled at different corners of the earth; and the wiles of the crafty, as well as the arm of power employed to extinguish it, Eckius, infuriate with rage, hastened to Rome, and backed with all the influence of the Dominicans and the inquisitors, carried to Leo his bitter accusations against Luther, and urged the necessity of suppressing so dangerous a heretic by the papal anathemas, before the contagion should spread too wide to admit of a remedy. Leo, too indolent to resist the importunities of those who surrounded him, and flattered by the confidence of the facility with which he might silence this troublesome reformer, signed the bull which fulminated excommunication against Luther's person, and ordered the ignominious burning of all his writings. Sixty days respite only were allowed him to abjure, repent, and cast himself on the mercy of the Pontiff.

Luther, whom the gentle treatment of Miltitz might have won, was filled with indignation, when this sentence was notified to him; and having taken a decided resolution, he determined to separate from the Romish communion, and to do it in the most public manner, in order to testify his contempt of the Pope and his authority, whilst he renewed his appeal to the next general council for his justification. Before the sixty days therefore were expired, he summoned a vast concourse of all ranks, curious to be present at so singular a cere-

mony, and kindling a fire, he, by the hands of the hangman, committed to it in presence of them all, the Pope's bull, with the sacerdotal code of canons and decretals, as renouncing henceforth all authority of Rome and her pontiffs ; a step suited to his daring spirit ; AN. 1520. and wise, as undaunted. Temporising measures were as uncongenial to the man, as ill-suited to the object he had in view. He wished to rouse a spirit of resolute opposition to these tyrannical mandates ; to show they might be despised with impunity : Whilst by his appeal to a general council, he interested in his favor all who regarded that as the supreme judge of controversy ; agreeable to what had been decided at the councils of Basil and Constance.* Thus his renunciation of Leo's authority, prevented not his professing firm attachment to the Catholic Church, and readiness to abide by the impartial decisions of an unprejudiced council.

A second bull, as soon as the sixty days expired, sealed the final damnation of the obstinate heretic ; and met the same contempt as the former. Indeed so far from intimidating the zealous reformer, it sharpened his resentment, and roused him to more vigorous exertions, to rescue from these unchristian procedures a body of his countrymen, sufficient to erect a barrier against his enemies, and to form a church more resembling the apostolic model in doctrine, and discipline, than that which he had formally renounced. Happily he found a number of the ablest scholars, as well as most excellent men of the age, ready to join in the necessary re

* In the Council of Basil the supremacy of the Catholic Church was established. To her decrees the Pope's themselves were made subject.

form, to which the weight of Melancthon's influence greatly contributed. The more the subject was canvassed, the more the groundless pretensions of the papacy were detected ; and the frauds and superstitions of its supporters brought to light, and exposed to the people ; who received with avidity the doctrine of the reformers, and formed a phalanx around them, which defended them from their blood-pursuers. Nor were the princes of the empire, catholic as they were, averse to see some of the pontifical claims disputed ; while Frederick of Saxony, who had embraced the truth, taught by Luther and his colleagues, afforded them all the protection in his power, without committing himself entirely as a partisan.

AN. 1519. Charles the Fifth of Spain, raised to the imperial throne chiefly by the zeal and favor of Frederic, in opposition to his competitor Francis the First, King of France, was unwilling to disoblige a friend, to whom he was so greatly indebted, and therefore, though hard pressed by the Pope to seize and execute this daring rebel against authority, Charles, at the request of Frederic, consented, that Luther should be judged by a German tribunal ; for which purpose a diet of the princes ecclesiastical and temporal assembled

AN. 1521. at Worms. There the culprit, fenced with a safe conduct from the Emperor, boldly appeared in person to plead his own cause, before that august assembly. Many of his friends, dreading the encounter ; fearing his own impetuosity would provoke enmity ; and knowing the savage cruelty of his judges, ready to violate the safe conduct, in order to glut their revenge, as in the case of Huss and Jerome, dissuaded him from appearing : but his confidence in the goodness of his claims made him court rather than

from such a public opportunity of pleading the cause of God and truth : and his courage engaged him fearlessly to declare, that, " if he met as many devils at Worms, as there were tiles on the houses, they should not deter him from his duty."

Yet he charmed his friends as much as he confounded his enemies, by the firmness and temperance of his defence, as well as by the eloquence and force of argument which he displayed on this occasion. Charles, who was compelled to flatter Leo, fought by every soothing caress and earnest solicitation to engage Luther to submit to the Pope. But when he found him inflexible, he menaced him with all the wrath of Rome and the Empire. The undaunted champion firmly, but coolly replied, that " whenever his opinions were proved erroneous, from the word of God, and his conduct criminal against Christ or his Church, he would ask nothing more to testify the deepest humiliation ; but if then, no man had a right to censure or condemn him." The Emperor, too generous to violate his safe conduct, permitted him to depart ; but the unanimous suffrage of the diet denounced the most condign punishment on the obstinate heretic ; and on all who should entertain, support, or conceal him ; deciding absolutely, that *the Pope was the sole judge of religious controversy in the Christian world.* A tenet so expressly contrary to the Germanic liberties and the received councils, as shocked many of those who would not at all have cared about the case of such an inconsiderable individual.

His kind friend and protector Frederic, who dreaded the consequence of Luther's falling into the hands of his enemies, contrived to way lay him as he returned from the diet ; and seized by men in masks, who were in the secret, he was carried off to the castle of War-

tenberg, and hid for ten months from all pursuit and discovery. There he employed his leisure and retirement in translating the New Testament, and keeping up the spirit of his friends by letters. His disappearing in this sudden manner raised a strong suspicion of his being made way with by his enemies, and tended to increase the general odium of the people against them: whilst his zealous disciples exerted themselves with greater activity than ever, in spreading the principles of the reformation; to which the absence of the Emperor Charles, whom his own political engagements called away from Germany, greatly contributed. He had indeed at that time providentially too many immediate concerns of importance to himself to occupy his attention, and no leisure to arrest the progress of reformation.

Carlostadt, the friend and colleague of Luther, during his retirement at Wartenberg, took the lead in the work of reformation: and as its progress was rapid, he improved the advantage of the influence which he had acquired, and resolved to cast down the images which had been so long the objects of popular adoration in the churches, and to expel the idolatrous mass. His own intemperate zeal, or rather that of his followers, is said to have occasioned much matter of offence, by proceeding in too tumultuary a manner. Luther himself sharply condemned their proceedings; and unable to lie any longer concealed, while Carlostadt was thus daring to oppose the papal abuses, he left his hiding place, and set himself again at the head of the reformed.

Some have charged Carlostadt with temerity, and Luther with envy at his activity, and with jealousy lest he should supplant him in the public opinion. And nothing is more probable than that they were men of like passions with ourselves: we plead for no faultless men.

siers of monkish perfection : but good men as Carlostadt might expect to have their zeal branded with intemperance ; and the spirit of Luther in his retirement might surely be roused by a nobler principle than envy to return to the work openly, and put his life in his hand. He might also reasonably fear, that a too precipitate conduct would injure the cause which they had equally at heart ; or they might differ in opinion, without evil. I confess, I have always honored Carlostadt, as a zealous instrument in the reformation ; in learning he was Luther's equal, in some of his opinions respecting the Eucharist, more scriptural, and only beneath him in that commanding popularity of address which no man of that day possessed like Luther.

During these commotions one great character, which all desired to draw over to their party, conscious of the weight of his influence, maintained a suspicious neutrality. ERASMUS, whom the keenness of his wit, the acuteness of his genius, and the depth of his learning, raised to the pinnacle of universal admiration, had, before Luther arose, begun to sharpen the shafts of ridicule against the monkish ignorance and abuses ; by his writings he had greatly loosened the shackles of blind veneration for the mendicant tribes, and prepared men's minds for the reformation. To him, Luther, Melancthon, and other reformers, warmly addressed themselves. He answered them with all civility, but with the most wary caution not to commit himself as a favorer of their cause ; though he professed to admit the chief doctrines which they promulged, and to acknowledge the necessity of a reform, to which no man had more contributed by his writings than himself. Yet he dreaded a rupture with the pontiff ; and flattered himself the object would be accomplished by the necessity of the case.

without violence. He would have been content with *some concessions*, and trembled at the rude hand of hasty reform. His study and books delighted him more than the activity of a laborer in the vineyard : and his temper indisposed him from the stormy ocean, which Luther dared to brave. He professed a high veneration for the bold reformer ; and though he thunned all intimacy that would have exposed him to reproach, he did not scruple to condemn the injustice and folly of the treatment which Luther had received from Leo ; and plainly manifested his apprehensions, that the enmity of the sacerdotal tribe, more than any real errors of the monk, was the cause of his condemnation. He dreaded also that the precipitation of Luther would bring him to an untimely end, as it had done so many preceding witnesses for the truth ; and that the consequences would be fatal to the cause : and probably the cowardice of his own spirit made him fear to be involved in the dangers which he apprehended. He maintained a cautious reserve on the subject of Luther's writings, and though he condemned the man, because the church had condemned him, and censured the violence of his proceedings, he declined answering the reformer, to which he was greatly urged, and left that honor to the Universities, the Dominicans, and Franciscans, pretending unwillingness to rob them of the glory. In fact, in all essential doctrines, Erasmus was with the reformers ; and saw as clearly the necessity of correcting the abuses which prevailed in the Church of Rome. But he was a man of a studious turn and timid spirit ; and however much his mind inclined to one side, his dread of consequences bent him as much to the other, and kept him suspended between the attracting magnets. Thus, feared by both parties, cordially loved by neither, suspected by all, he obtained not the favor of Rome, but was left

to languish in indigence ; and he shared none of the glory of reformation, by meanly shrinking from the cross. A great man, a good man, an admired man ; but not daring to take a decided part, he remained the victim of his own cautious timidity.

Luther's translation of the bible had now circulated like the sun, through Germany, and cast a flood of light upon the benighted minds of men. His works were diffused through Christendom. England and the Low Countries received vast edification from them. They fanned the fires which had been there previously kindled, though kept under by the strong arm of authority and clerical tyranny. The Saxons, and many of their neighbors, had taken the liberty to reform their own abuses. The impious mass was abolished ; the convents evacuated ; and the priests chose a wife, a sister, to live in the holy estate of marriage instead of unnatural and criminal celibacy. The chief of the reformers set the example, and were quickly followed by the multitude of their brethren.

A host of authors now arose to overwhelm the daring reformer with their arguments, or their invectives. Among these the eminence of his station has made the King of England most remarkable ; gained by the flatteries of the Pope and his own clergy, arrogant in his nature, cruel, a tyrant, and friend to tyranny of every sort, he could bear no resistance to established authority : withal a bigotted Catholic, and only driven by his impetuous and criminal passions to quarrel with the holy see, when in compliance with the Emperor it presumed to thwart his violence and gratifications. England had happily, since the days of Wickliffe, possessed a precious seed that was to the Lord for a generation ; and the records which remain in the registers of the un-

christian and cruel bishops of that day, demonstrate the frequent charges of heresy : the abjuration of some, and the burning of others, afford compleat conviction that the light had not been extinct in our Israel. Tenterden, in Kent, is particularly noticed. Even in the days of Richard the Second, an act of parliament specifies the numerous followers of Wickliff, who preached in many places, *churches, church-yards, and markets, without licence of the ordinary.* A most heretical deed ! These continued to afford continual *matter for broiling*, to the bishops and spiritual courts : and though nothing could extinguish the light in Israel, the faithful few were driven into concealment to avoid the dangers which threatened them on detection, or if but suspected, that they had Wickliff's bible in their houses, and presumed to search the Scriptures daily. Yet multitudes were found approving that great reformer ; and no sooner were the writings of Luther sent over, than they were read with avidity ; and in London, and many other places, produced such manifest effects, as to awaken the vigilance and accusations of the sacerdotal tribe, whose craft was in danger : to rouse the alarm of the spread of heresy ; and to call forth the most vigorous exertions to suppress its progress. The haughty Henry VIII. the ambitious Wolsey, and the whole bench of prelates, united in their determination to consume with fire all opponents of papal supremacy : and the King, in the abundance of his zeal, undertook, himself, to write a confutation of Luther's "*Babylonish Captivity* ;" with a defence of the Romish Church, and the Catholic Faith. This royal volume, presented with great pomp to Leo, procured for the zealous monarch, the golden perfumed rose of papal benediction ; and the great and mighty title of *Defender of the Faith*, in which Henry peculiarly gloried. AN.

Luther, whose feelings were as keen as his spirit was elevated, looked down upon the puny, popish, monarchical champion, and answered him with a contempt and asperity, which many condemned as disrespectful to Majesty, but which Luther vindicated. No respect of persons, in controversy, was due to a king more than to another man, who dared to blaspheme the King of kings, and to tarnish the glory of his person and gospel.

AN. 1522. In the midst of this turbid state of the Church, Leo X. departed to give an account of himself to a higher tribunal: and left his successor, Adrian VI. to endeavor to compose a contest, which his rashness and imprudence had set on foot.

Adrian had been Charles's tutor, and a man of singular probity. He was favored by him in the conclave, and raised to the see by his influence. He saw, and lamented the disorders of the clergy. He made some feeble attempts to reform them. The disease was too inveterate. Less happy, as he declared, on the papal throne, than in his professor's chair at Louvain, he bore the load of dignity with reluctance, and quickly devolved the burden on one more suited to the politics of the tiara.

AN. 1523. The Diet at Nuremberg was assembled in the absence of the Emperor, to compose the disturbances to which the reformation had given occasion. Adrian sent thither his legate; but on his demise, Clement VI. selected a man more congenial with his own spirit, the famous Cardinal Campegio, of whom England has heard so much. He breathed against Luther and his adherents nothing but threatnings and slaughter; and blamed the tardy lenity of the princes, that had neglected to enforce the decisions of the Diet at Worms. They on the contrary, presented a long list of their

grievances ; and prohibited all changes in ecclesiastical matters, till a general council should be assembled to decide the points in controversy. A general council was a word of odious omen in the ears of the Roman pontiff, and equally dreaded as Luther himself.

It is painful amidst the glories of the rising reformation, to record the disputes which broke out among the reformers themselves, and greatly retarded
AN. 1524. their progress. The controversy began between Luther and Carlostadt, about the manner in which the body and blood of Christ were to be regarded in the Eucharist. Though Luther had rejected the monstrous doctrine of *transubstantiation*, he supported one little less absurd ; that Christ was in the sacrament after consecration, by a *real presence*, as heat in iron when ignited. This has received the name *consubstantiation*. Carlostadt embraced the simpler and more scriptural idea, that the bread and wine were only *signs* and *symbols* ; and in this he was cordially supported by the able Zuinglius. The obstinacy of Luther's character is indefensible. He claimed the authority to dictate, which he was himself so averse to allow the Pope. Bitterness of controversy, indeed, ill became such men ; nor was the subject of dispute worthy such a contest ; which terminated in a schism, unhealed unto this day. Let us drop a tear over human infirmity : learn by experience to bear and forbear : and remember always, that the best of men are but men at the best.

Another and most grievous scourge arose collaterally from the spreading light of truth. The peasants, grievously oppressed and enslaved, with emancipation from spiritual bondage, received a taste for civil liberty, and detected many gross abuses of the power of their tyrannical nobles. And who can deny that real oppressions

were at the bottom of their just complaints? Two famous, or infamous shall I call them, malecontents, set themselves at the head of the irritated peasants; and for a long while wasted the empire with fire and sword. *Munster* and *Stork* were Anabaptists, and swayed by popular talents the credulous multitude to follow their banners. A battle, in which they were defeated, and their leaders put to death, for a while appeased the troubles which they had occasioned, though the sect was not suppressed by the execution of their chiefs, but subsists to this day.

Luther, at whose door the Catholics laid every commotion, defended himself victoriously; and addressed the insurgents to recover them by argument, in vain. The strong arm of power alone could subdue them. Among this host of peasants all were not fanatic, nor of ill intentions. Many were deceived by their leaders, and sought only exemptions from burthens too heavy to be borne. As far as religious tenets entered into their views, the abuses of the hierarchy made them covet, and profess to seek a purer, and more apostolic establishment. But, as in all confusions is the case, when once the barrier of authority is cast down, a deluge of unintended evils rushes in, and desolates the soil, which the reformers purposed to improve. Whilst man is the corrupted creature the scriptures describe him, it is hardly possible but that offences should come; the woe remains with those who give occasion to them.

AN. 1525. *FREDERIC, the Wise*, departing during these commotions, left his brother *JOHN*, the successor to his dominions, and the head of the Lutheran cause. *Frederic* had always acted with singular moderation; and though he protected the fervent reformer from all his enemies, he did not wholly break with Rome. He hoped by gentle methods to obtain relief from all the

miseries complained of, without a schism being made in the Church. John was of a different mind. Sensible of the pride and unyielding obstinacy of Rome and her pontiffs, he thought, for the honor of the cause, he could not take too decided a part ; and therefore, by his own authority, undertook to regulate all ecclesiastical matters within the extent of his jurisdiction. Luther and Melancthon were employed to draw up a code of ecclesiastical directory for Saxony, and its dependences ; and the churches were furnished with the most faithful and wise pastors that could be found, in the place of those who had dishonored their sacred profession by their immoralities, or continued to maintain obedience to a foreign potentate. Many of the princes and free cities followed the example of the elector John ; and thus first a complete Lutheran establishment was erected through a considerable part of the empire, and the yoke of Rome broken from their necks.

But neither the Pope, the Emperor, nor the Catholic princes could look on unconcerned spectators of these dreaded innovations. Temporal interests as well as religious zeal, roused them to concert the means of preventing the spreading evil. This concert of the Catholics, and their designs, were not hid from the Lutheran abettors ; and they resolved on a plan of union and self-defence, if the necessities of the times, and the attacks of their enemies should oblige them to repel force with force. Happily, the political situation of Charles the Fifth suspended for a while the storm which was ready to burst ; and each party rested on their arms.

AN. 1526. A Diet held at Spires, where Ferdinand, the brother of Charles, presided, separated with an agreement, that every prince should order ecclesiastical matters in his own dominions, as he judged best ; till a gen-

eral council should be assembled, to decide upon the controverted subjects. Than this resolution, nothing could be more favorable to the cause of reformation; which only asked peace and tolerance to prosper. Another providential circumstance had happened: the fears of the Pope having led him to embrace the interests of Francis the First after the battle of Pavia, and to form a league against the preponderating influence of the Emperor in Italy. On this, Charles became cool in the prosecution of the Protestants; besieged and took the Pope prisoner; and amidst these conflicts of the superior powers, the poor protestants in Germany had leisure, and opportunity, to cement their union, and strengthen themselves against all future opposition.—
AN. 1527.

But Charles had no sooner carried his designs in Italy into effect, and humbled Clement to submission, than he made a treaty with the Pontiff, in which the destruction of the Protestants was designed, and the establishment of the dominion of Charles in Germany a principal object. To this end, a second Diet was convoked at Spire, where the Emperor caused the former resolutions to be rescinded by a *majority*; though they had been before decreed *unanimously*; and, till a general council should be assembled, he forbade any change to be admitted from the Romish established religion. AN. 1529.

The Elector of Saxony, the Prince of Hesse, and the other Lutheran supporters, nobles and ecclesiastics, perceived the snare that was laid for them. If no alteration was allowed, till sanctioned by a general council, they saw the cause of Lutheranism must be desperate. They therefore entered their solemn protest against the resolution of the Diet; and resolved to maintain the

changes they had made. From this protest, they have ever since, with all who rejected the papal government, received the denomination of PROTESTANTS. AN.
1529.

The Protestant princes notified to the Emperor, by their ambassadors, the resolutions which they had adopted : but Charles, by insolently arresting these representatives of their sovereigns, bid them be on their guard against the designs formed against them ; and unite for mutual defence. But alas ! the differences of opinion which prevailed among them, prevented their coming to a decisive resolution. And a conference at Marburg, to settle these differences between the Protestant divines, especially on the article of the *real presence*, produced no change in the sentiments of the disputants. Œcolampadius and Zuinglius, opposed Luther and Melancthon : and whilst the former refuted all the charges laid against them, to the conviction of their opponents, in the grand articles of dispute respecting the Eucharist, there is at this day little doubt on which side the truth was found. But Luther was a man not given to yield. All that could be gained, was, to bear with each other in the points of difference ; and to wait till God, by the word of his truth and spirit, should give them clearer discoveries of his mind in the controverted points.

The Emperor's approach, for a moment, turned all their thoughts to the Diet at Augsburg, which he meant to attend after so long an absence. At an interview with the Pope by the way, he urged the necessity of calling a general council. But that crafty prelate too much dreaded to commit his authority to such an assembly, and under such an Emperor. Clement urged him therefore to execute upon the heretics, deserved ven-

geance, as became a dutiful son of the Church. The matter, however, did not appear to Charles so easy of accomplishment ; and he relished not the injustice of condemning men unheard : his dissatisfaction, therefore, with the pontiff, was as great as Clement's displeasure at not seeing the fires for burning the heretics already kindled.

Meantime, the Elector of Saxony, to prevent misrepresentations, and to make the Emperor perfectly master of the subject in dispute, enjoined Luther, Melancthon, and other divines, to draw up a clear summary of the Protestant doctrines. This produced the famed *Confession of Augsburg*, ever since appealed to as the standard of protestantism.* In awful suspense both parties awaited the result of this assembly, and prepared their forces for the contest, whether of the pen, the tongue, or the sword. AN. 1530.

The reformation had by this time made a wonderful progress on every side.

Denmark and Norway, under one of the greatest monsters who ever swayed a sceptre, had received early the Lutheran doctrine. It happened to be, politically, highly desirable to Christiern II. among other objects, in his way to despotic power, to humble the clergy ; who had engrossed the wealth of half the kingdom, and desired to usurp influence over the whole. To sap the foundation of their power, he invited Reinard, a convert of Carlostadt, and afterwards that reformer himself, to

* The Confession of Augsburg, drawn up by the elegant pen of Melancthon, consists of twenty eight chapters ; twenty one of which are employed in stating the religious opinions of the protestants, and the rest in stating those errors of the papacy which were the ground of their dissent.

visit him. These laid the foundations of the reformation in Denmark. Advancing with hasty strides under royal patronage, it was alike favored by his successor ; and, in the course of a few years, the final change was accomplished, and popery, root and branch, overturned in the Diet of Odensee, in 1539, under the reign of Christiern the Third, and the ministry of the celebrated Bugenhagen, the faithful disciple of Luther.

AN. 1527. The great Gustavus Vasa, who, from the depths of the mines of Dalecarlia, rose to the throne of Sweden by the suffrages of his countrymen, as the just reward of his patriotism : not only rescued their bodies from the tyrannical yoke of Christiern, but their souls from the more dreadful bondage of popery. During his conflicts with the Danes for liberty, two noble champions, Olaus Petri, and his brother, had set up the standard of truth in Sweden, and all men flocked to it. The German auxiliaries who came to his help, brought also the Lutheran faith, and bibles with them. And as the bitterest enemies of their country, and the partisans of Denmark and Rome were found in the prelatical order, who possessed the chief strength, wealth, and power in the kingdom, after the massacre of Stockholm, it became absolutely necessary to humble their insolence, and clip the wings of their ambition; before the liberties of Sweden could be fixed on a durable basis. Vasa, whose interest exactly coincided with his inclinations, encouraged with all his weight of influence and authority, these zealous reformers : and, on the settlement of the kingdom, the fabric of popery was utterly demolished, and a purer evangelical establishment fixed, through the labors of Olaus and his colleagues.

Yet, in Sweden and Norway, they followed a model different in government from the Germanic churches;

and preserved the order of bishops and archbishops; though their enormous revenues were abridged, and all their fortified castles and civil power devolved to the crown, the proper possessor of them. In Denmark, the very name of bishop fell with their sees, and *superintendants*, with episcopal privileges, presided in their ecclesiastical councils. That these changes met with violent opposition, may be supposed. Men who had to defend their dignities, their wealth, besides the prejudices of education, did not easily yield; and often exposed themselves to violence and oppression. Great alterations are seldom or ever brought about without very blameable acts of authority in the ruling party. Let no man vindicate abuses in the cause of protestanism, whilst he pleads against them in the hand of popery.

AN. 1539. The great master of the Teutonic order, the ancestor of the present kings of Prussia, following the example of Luther and the reformers, took to himself a wife, and set up the Lutheran profession through Prussia, Magdeburg, and the dominions which he possessed in the North.

Nor could France avoid the infection. Even at court, many of the nobility espoused the new doctrines, and a vast multitude embraced the Protestant faith notwithstanding the bitter enmity which Francis I. is said to have expressed against it, and which always rankled in his heart. His political interests compelling him to unite sometimes with the protestant princes in Germany, they engaged him to a momentary reluctant toleration of their brethren in France. But his connexions with the Pope, and his own inclinations, oftener led him to indulge his bigotry, in committing the protestants to the flames, and suppressing the profession of the gospel, by the most atrocious acts of cruelty and oppression. It

was to escape the sword of this persecutor, that the famed Calvin, a name never to be mentioned by a Protestant but with reverence, fled to Basil, where he published that noble defence of the evangelical doctrine, in a treatise called *Christian Institutes*, dedicated to his persecutor, and admired for its latinity, as well as force of argument.

Calvin was a native of Piccardy ; he was intended for the church ; but, in compliance with his father's wishes, applied himself to the law. The reigning controversies early engaged his attention. He read the scriptures with the greatest solemnity and diligence, and no sooner examined, than he embraced the doctrines of truth ; which he adorned by a conversation the most exemplary, and promoted with an eloquence that charmed the ear, whilst it carried conviction to the heart. Through his labors as well as those of Beza and others, famous in their day, men of renown, the cause daily triumphed in Geneva and through Switzerland ; and threatened the downfall of the antichristian power in the South, as it had already fallen in the North. Nor could any thing have prevented a complete revolution, but the united force of regal and papal powers, suppressing, by every atrocity, the spirit of enquiry ; and executing, on the more zealous professors, every torment diabolical cruelty could invent. Without this the reign of popery had then fallen, and not awaited its overthrow to the present day.

Spain, the most ignorant, bigotted, and servile of the Roman see, was penetrated by the light of truth, in spite of all the fires of inquisitors, and their watchfulness to suppress the first approaches of what Rome called heresy. It even passed the mountains, and spread into many parts of Italy, the very seat of THE BEAST.

In Switzerland, it triumphed in many cantons. It entered Hungary, Transylvania, Poland ; and every where produced a plenteous harvest, amidst the bitterest persecutions from the ruling powers, and the bloody bishops whose ecclesiastical courts were crowded with prosecutions, and their prisons filled with confessors. The enemies of truth and godliness pretended not to confine themselves to the Bible, or arguments which they found to be impotent ; but every where had recourse to torments, racks, and gibbets ; the only effectual syllogisms with which they could answer the reformers, and check the course of what they called heresy. The Church of Rome tottered from its foundation. Nothing but the strong arm of power, and the interest which the rich and proud had in maintaining its usurpations, propped up the trembling fabric for a while longer ; till the appointed time should arrive for its final overthrow. For a space, the deadly wound was healed by the kings of the earth, under the papal hierarchy, giving their power to the beast, and suppressing by the violence of persecution, the rising flame of the reformation : but the day we hope is approaching for its fall, never to rise up again.

CHAP. II.

ON THE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMATION, AND
THE UNION OF SENTIMENT AMONG THE RE-
FORMERS.

IT has been often supposed and suggested, that the reformers themselves were at variance on the most important doctrines of the gospel; and, that Luther and Calvin differed greatly in the fundamental articles of their creed: whereas, except in the matter of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, all the eminent men among the reformers of that day, concurred in the same fundamental truths:—

1. Of God's eternal purpose and predestination of an elect people, and those, comparatively few, ordained to life and glory eternal.

2. That man had lost all ability to do good, and freedom of will to choose it: and was in his nature, as fallen, only inclined to evil.

3. That nothing ever did or can alter this propensity of the human heart, but the Holy Ghost by his own immediate agency upon the souls of men.

4. That a sinner is, and can be justified by faith only; and this not of himself; being unable, either to comprehend, or receive the things that be of the Spirit of God; and therefore, the faith itself must be the gift of God.

5. That *merit* in creature there is none, nor ever can be. From first to last a sinner must be saved by grace.

6. That the vicarious atonement by the one oblation of Christ upon the cross is effectual, not for the many called, but for the few chosen.

These things are what the reformers uniformly held; as is evident in the conferences at Marpurg, between Luther and Zuinglius, Melancthon and Oecolampadius. And nothing in the institutes of Calvin speaks a stronger language, than the answer of Luther to Erasmus, entitled *DE SERVO ARBITRIO*. I shall produce only one paragraph from it, demonstrative of the *one faith*, universally confessed in all the first Protestant churches. It is among our deepest miseries, and the proof of our sad declensions, that we, of latter times, have departed from "the faith once delivered unto the saints;" revived in *that day* in all its primitive glory: and thanks be to God, after long obscurity, again rising in its brightness in the present generation. May its great Revealer manifest his own almighty influence, and cause the word of truth to run and have free course, and be glorified throughout the world.

Erasmus had attacked Luther on the doctrines of predestination and grace; and according to the present cant of objectors, he urged. "What can be more useless, than to publish this paradox to the world? namely, That whatever we do, is done, not by *virtue of our own free will*, but in a way of *necessity*. &c. What a wide gap does the publication of this tenet open among men, for the commission of all ungodliness? What wicked person will reform his life? Who will dare to believe himself a favorite of heaven? Who will fight against his own corrupt inclinations? Therefore, where is either

the need, or the utility of spreading these notions from whence so many evils seem to flow?

To this Luther triumphantly replies, "If, my Erasmus, you consider these paradoxes (as you term them) to be no more than the inventions of men; why are you so extraordinarily heated on the occasion? In that case your arguments affect not me; for there is no person now living in the world, who is a more avowed enemy to the doctrines of men than myself. But, if you believe the doctrines in debate between us to be, (as indeed they are) the doctrines of God; you must have bid adieu to all sense of shame and decency, thus to oppose them. I will not ask, whither is the *modesty* of Erasmus fled? but, which is much more important, where alas! are your fear and reverence of the Deity, when you roundly declare, that this branch of truth, which he has revealed from heaven, is at best *useless*, and unnecessary to be known? What! shall the glorious Creator be taught by you his creature, what is fit to be preached, and what to be suppressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom, and prudence, as not to know, till you instruct him, what would be *useful* and what pernicious? Or could not *He*, whose understanding is infinite, foresee, previous to his revelation of this doctrine, what would be the consequences of his revealing it, till those consequences were pointed out by you? You cannot, you dare not, say this. If then it was the divine pleasure to make known these things in his word; and to bid his messengers publish them abroad, and to leave the consequences of their so doing to the wisdom and providence of him in whose name they speak, and whose messages they declare; who art thou, O Erasmus that thou shouldst reply against God, and say to the Almighty, what doest thou? St. Paul, discoursing of

God, declared peremptorily, *whom he will he hardeneth* : and again, *God willing to shew his wrath, &c.* And the Apostle did not write this to have it stifled among a few persons, and buried in a corner ; but wrote it to the Christians at Rome : which was, in effect, bringing this doctrine upon the stage of the whole world ; stamping an universal *imprimatur* upon it : and publishing it to believers at large, throughout the earth. What can sound harsher in the uncircumcised ears of carnal men, than those words of Christ, *many are called, but few are chosen* ? and elsewhere, *I know whom I have chosen*. Now these, and similar assertions of Christ and his Apostles, are the very positions which you, O Erasmus, brand as useless and hurtful. You object, if these things are so, who will amend his life ? I answer, without the Holy Ghost no man *can* amend his life to purpose. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy, unless it proceed from grace. The elect and truly pious are amended by the spirit of God : and those of mankind, who are not amended by *him*, will perish. You ask moreover, who will dare to believe himself a favorite of heaven ? I answer, it is not in a man's own power to believe himself such, upon just grounds, till he is enabled from above. But the elect shall be so enabled : they shall be enabled to believe themselves to be what indeed they are. As for the rest, who are not endued with faith, they shall perish ; raging and blaspheming, as you do now. But, say you, these doctrines open a door to ungodliness ? I answer, whatever door they may open to the impious and profane, yet they open a door of righteousness to the elect and holy, and shew them the way to Heaven, and the path of access unto God. Yet you would have us abstain from the mention of these grand doctrines, and leave our people in the dark, as to their election of God. The consequence of which

would be, that every man would bolster himself up with a delusive hope of a share in that salvation, which is supposed to lie open to all : and thus genuine humility, and the practical fear of God, would be kicked out of doors. This would be a pretty way indeed of stopping up the gap Erasmus complains of ! Instead of closing up the door of licentiousness, as is falsely pretended ; it would be in fact opening a gulph into the nethermost hell. Still you urge, where is either the necessity or utility of preaching predestination ? God himself teaches it, and commands us to teach it : and that is answer enough. We are not to arraign the Deity, and bring the motives of his will to the test of human scrutiny, but simply to revere both him and it. He, who alone is all-wise and all-just, can in reality (however things appear to us) do wrong to no man ; neither can he do any thing unwisely or rashly. And this consideration will suffice to silence all objections of truly religious persons. However, let us for argument's sake, go a step farther. I will venture to assign over and above, two very important reasons why these doctrines should be publicly taught : 1st. For the humiliation of our pride, and the manifestation of divine grace. God hath assuredly promised his favors to the truly humble. By the *truly humble*, I mean those who are endued with repentance and despair of saving themselves : for a man can never be said to be truly penitent and humble, till he is made to know that his salvation is not suspended in any measure whatever, on his own strength, machinations, endeavors, free will, or works : but entirely depends on the free pleasure, purpose, determination, and efficiency of another, even of God alone. Whilst a man is persuaded that he has it in his own power to contribute any thing, be it ever so little, to his own salvation ; he remains in carnal confidence : he is not a self-despairer, and therefore he is

not duly humbled before God ; so far from it, that he hopes some favorable juncture or opportunity will offer, when he may be able to lend an helping hand to the business of his salvation. On the contrary, whoever is truly convinced that the whole work depends singly and absolutely on the will of God, who alone is the author and finisher of salvation, such a person despairs of self-assistance : he renounces his own will and his own strength : he waits and prays for the operation of God : nor waits and prays in vain. For the elect's sake therefore these doctrines are to be preached : that the chosen of God, being humbled by the knowledge of his truths ; self-emptying and sunk into nothing as it were in his presence, may be saved in Christ, with eternal glory. This then is one inducement to the publication of the doctrine ; that the penitent may be made acquainted with the promise of grace, and plead it in prayer to God, and receive it as their own. 2d: The nature of the Christian faith requires it. Faith has to do with things not seen. And this is one of the highest degrees of faith, stedfastly to believe that God is infinitely merciful, though he saves (comparatively) but few, and condemns so many ; and that he is strictly just, though of his own will he makes such numbers of mankind necessarily liable to damnation. Now, these are some of the unseen things whereof faith is the evidence. Whereas, was it in my power to comprehend them, or clearly to make out *how* God is both inviolably just, and infinitely merciful, notwithstanding the display of wrath, and seeming inequality in his dispensations, respecting the reprobate, faith would have little or nothing to do. But now since these matters cannot be adequately comprehended by us, in the present state of imperfection, there is room for the exercise of faith. The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches should be taught and pub-

lished. They, no less than the other mysteries of Christian doctrine, being proper objects of faith, on the part of God's people."

As I have been charmed myself with the plainness and simplicity of this testimony of Luther, I have produced it, as the most conclusive proof of the sentiments of this great reformer. I wish it seriously to be considered; and I appeal to every man of common sense, whether any thing can be more explicit, or words less equivocal. Indeed I am ever amazed, that any man of learning, not to say common sense, can, after such plain declarations, dispute what was the opinion of the reformers in the Augsburg Confession, the Helvetic, or the English.—That persons may dispute the truths which these contain may be allowed, and welcome. No man is constrained to believe any human articles of faith; but to dispute the meaning of the reformers in these articles is utterly disingenuous, and unbecoming literary men, who have read the history of the times, or the works of the reformers. I will readily admit, that the doctrines of the reformation have very much gone out of vogue, in all the protestant churches as well as our own; but that does not at all alter the case, or give us a liberty to put a meaning upon their articles of faith, the very reverse of what they intended to convey. But, *surdo narras fabulam.*

CHAP. III.

FROM THE DIET OF AUGSBURG TO THE RELIGIOUS
PEACE IN THE SAME CITY.

AN. **I**N awful suspense, the contending parties awaited the issue of the diet at Augsburg, but very differently were they affected. A slight sketch of their situation may be amusing as instructive.

CLEMENT, the Pope, dreaded a general council ; to defeat which all his arts were to be employed. He wished not to compromise the dignity of *his see*, which, having set itself above all controul, would not stoop to be limited by any superiority, which these assemblies claimed, and of which the councils of Constance and Basil had given him fearful examples ; but he had a sensibility peculiarly his own, as he was a bastard, and might therefore justly be impeached and degraded, as an intruder into the vicegerency of Christ, according to the canons.

The EMPEROR wished a general council, the deliberations of which he hoped to controul ; but he had also a variety of particular views. He wanted the assistance of the Protestant as well as Catholic electors, to defend the empire, and particularly his hereditary dominions, which were most exposed, against the victorious Ottomans, who had lately besieged his capital of Vienna, and though defeated, he dreaded their return. But he had a object still more at heart, to establish in Germany his power, as despotically, as in his hereditary dominions ; and

to subdue both Catholics and Protestants to himself, which could only be done by deceiving both, and making one the instrument of weakening the other.

The CATHOLIC PRINCES abhorred the reformation; and, zealously attached to the superstitions of Rome, wished to prevent all admission of the Lutheran tenets into their territories, and to reduce the Lutheran princes by force of arms, under the Roman yoke which they had broken.

The PROTESTANTS, not well united among themselves, saw all their danger, and endeavored to avert the storm which they perceived gathering around them. They resolved to maintain the steps they had taken; and to advance the work of reformation which they had begun. But they were in Germany as yet, the weaker party; and in great danger of being crushed by the weight of the Emperor and the Catholic princes. Their interest therefore was evidently to gain time: and by reference of the matters in dispute to a general council, not likely to be held in the present state of the contending parties, to gather strength for the conflicts which threatened them.

With these several views they all assembled at Augs- burg; and the Emperor opened the diet, when the Augsburg Confession was read by Bucer to the Emperor and Princes, and heard with profound attention. A similar profession of faith was received from the cities of Strasburg, Constance, Meningen, and Lindau, drawn up by Bucer; a noble defence of the Protestant doctrines.

The Catholics, with the envenomed Eckius at their head, assisted by Faber and Cochläus, produced a refutation of the Protestant Confession: and the Emperor and the Catholic Princes, with the Pope's legate, de-

manded the submission of the Protestants to their doughty champions' arguments. But as these carried not the least conviction to their antagonists, they requested a copy of this pretended refutation, that they might answer it. This was denied ; their obedience to Rome was peremptorily enjoined ; and silence imposed on them for the future. Such proceedings necessarily increased their opposition. They presented to Charles a reply to Eckius and his colleagues, which he objected to receive. The Protestants had therefore only to defend themselves by force, or submit to the oppression.

When Charles found them resolute, he hesitated to drive matters to extremities : and an attempt was made by conferences between the opponents, to see if no temperament conciliatory could be found. Melancthon, too conceding, would have gone great lengths to prevent a rupture, but dared not yield the great truths of God ; whilst the Papists urged their party to insist on terms impossible to be complied with. These were accordingly rejected. The Hessian and Saxon Princes withdrew. The Emperor dictated the decree, suppressing the changes which had been made in religion ; and commanded all men to return to the papal obedience, at the peril of his imperial wrath : in the execution of which, the Catholic Princes and their party engaged to support the Emperor with all their forces.

AN. 1531. The Protestant Princes now stood upon their defence, and seeing remonstrance in vain, met at Smalkald. and formed a solemn league for the support of their liberties, in which they earnestly invited all those to unite, who had cast off the tyranny of Rome, and wished to preserve their brethren from being compelled to return to the house of their prison. Luther was averse to the way of arms ; but the necessity of the case

compelled his consent ; though the bigotry of his spirit excluded Switzerland and the cities, which had presented their confession of faith by Bucer, from the league.

The electors of the Palatinate and Mentz, dreaded the approaching rupture, which now seemed inevitable in the Germanic body ; and endeavored to reconcile the parties, or at least to suspend the fatal blow. And such was the Emperor's situation, that he was compelled to lend a reluctant ear to the proposal of withdrawing his decrees. The Turks threatened Germany, and the Protestants refused all assistance, till the edicts of Worme and Augsburg were recalled. Nor would they ratify the succession of his brother Ferdinand to the imperial throne, notwithstanding his majority of votes, but on this condition. Necessity bends the most obstinate politician. Charles, to carry these two points, was obliged to yield, and leave the Lutherans to themselves, till the promised council should assemble to settle the differences in religion. AN. 1532.

The great support of the Protestant cause, the faithful Saxon, soon after departed, and left his electorate to his son and successor John Frederic, equally zealous with his father, but born for adversity. The peace obtained was highly advantageous to the cause of Lutheranism, which many states now openly avowed, who had been before restrained by apprehensions of the imperial decrees. And Clement, though urged by the Emperor, still temporising, contrived to stave off by evasions, the assembling a general council, which he so much dreaded ; and died before any place could be fixed upon agreeable to the several parties. AN. 1534.

During this interval of suspense, events had happened of the most important kind.

HENRY the Eighth, after a long solicitation at Rome for a sentence of divorce from his Queen Catherine, in order to marry Anna Bulleyn, wearied with the tricks of the legate Campegio, and the duplicity of the Pope, to the great joy of the Protestants, threw off the papal authority altogether. The Pope had solemnly promised the King of France, that if Henry would send his submissions to the holy see, he would sanction the divorce; especially as all the universities had concurred in their suffrages of the unlawfulness of the King's marriage with his brother's widow. But as she was the near relation of the Emperor, and her cause warmly espoused by him, the Pope, who dreaded the Emperor's resentment, and had promised him to support the Queen, was in the most unhappy dilemma. CLEMENT cared neither about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the marriage, and had as little thought about religion in the matter, as the King, of conscience, notwithstanding all his pretended scruples. Impatient at the delays, and irritated with the repeated deceptions practised upon him by the legates, sent to protract the affair, Henry threatened to withdraw himself and kingdom totally from the papal jurisdiction. Clement would fain have still temporised, and kept the matter in obedience; but pushed hard by the imperialists, he pronounced the fatal sentence of the validity of the marriage, with the dire threats of anathemas, if the King was refractory. Two days after, the King's submission, which Clement had required, reached Rome. It had happily arrived too late. The Pope dared not retract, for fear of the Emperor; and Henry was a man of too violent a temper to be thus insulted. He withdrew himself therefore and his kingdom, wholly from the papal dominion; and to the great joy of his subjects, especially the favorers of reformation, cut off all intercourse with Rome; which his parlia-

ment confirmed : and conferred on their monarch the supremacy in Church, as well as State. But it must not be imagined that Henry became a Protestant, by ceasing to be a Papist. No, he was exactly the same unprincipled tyrannical despot as before, and as disposed to persecute Protestant as Papist, who dared to swerve a hair from his decisions.

AN. 1533. A King of a different sort, JOHN of Leyden, figured upon the theatre in Germany. He was a taylor by trade ; and setting himself at the head of a fanatic multitude, seized on the city of Munster, where he erected what his deluded followers called the NEW JERUSALEM, over which he presided. But this newly erected throne, established in blood and tumult, was of short duration ; and ended in the capture and execution of the monarch and his ministers ; and the dispersion of the rabble which followed him. They were of the Anabaptist sect ; at that time remarkable for turbulence, though since subsided into a more peaceable spirit.

The Emperor, finding his efforts to obtain a general council, which would be at all satisfactory to the German Princes, constantly thwarted by the crafty Pontiffs, resolved to attempt settling matters himself, in a diet. For this end he ordered a conference at Worms between Melancthon and Eckius, for several days ; but the disputants appeared as far from each other as ever : and when assembled afterwards, at the diet which met at Ratisbon, no final decision could be concluded. The Pope by his legate, proposed Trent for the place of the assembling the council. The Protestant princes objected to the place, as well as to the papal claim of summoning the persons who should constitute that body ; which, they complained, must in that case be partial : but, as the

Emperor and Catholic princes consented, the letters of convocation were issued. The Protestants refused to submit; and Charles, who had now supposed himself able, determined to compel them. Both sides prepared for battle. Amidst the din of preparations, the great reformer Luther closed his eyes: deploring the miseries, he feared, and exhorting to prayer, patience, and mutual forbearance, as the choicest weapons of our warfare. AN. 1546.

He was indeed taken away from the evil to come. The council of Trent assembled. The Protestants disclaimed their authority. The Emperor prepared to enforce their decrees by arms. The Saxon Elector, and the Prince of Hesse, boldly prevented him; and penetrating into Bavaria, were ready to force the Emperor in his camp at Ingolstadt; when the treacherous Maurice, the nephew of the Elector, debauched by the promise of the Electorate, and yielding to the cravings of criminal ambition, fell upon Saxony, and compelled John to retire from Bavaria, in order to defend his own dominions. Pursued and surrounded in his retreat; deserted by a considerable part of his army; and compelled to fight at disadvantage; he lost the battle of Muhlberg and his liberty together. And Philip of Hesse, his coadjutor, persuaded by his son-in-law, Maurice, to cast himself upon the Emperor's clemency, with promises of favor, and preservation of his estates, was detained prisoner, in breach of the most solemn engagement; it is said, by the subterfuge of a German word inserted in the agreement; which would, if true, have only added the greatest meanness to the most perfidious conduct. AN. 1547.

The Protestant cause now, to human view, appeared desperate. The Emperor, with an army, overawed the

diet. Maurice, gained by the Emperor, with the Protestant leaders, consented to submit to the decisions of Trent; what *they* would be, it was impossible to doubt. But equally vain are counsel and might against the Lord. He can take the proud in their own devices, and disappoint their purposes by the very means planned for their accomplishment.

The plague breaking out at Trent, a few fathers went to Bologna, and the rest dispersed: nor could all the remonstrances of the Emperor engage the Pope to bring them back again. Vexed to the heart at these tricks of papal management, Charles resolved to mortify the pontiff, by shewing him that he could act without him. He caused therefore a *formulary* to be drawn up, such as he hoped might be accepted by both parties, because the expressions were so ambiguous, as that each might give it their own interpretation: adding some concessions to the Protestants, respecting the sacrament in both kinds, and the marriage of the clergy. Hereupon he called a diet, read the decrees which he had ordered to be prepared, and without any suffrage of the princes, enacted this as the rule, till a general council should otherwise direct. Hence this decree received the name of the INTERIM; as it was merely designed to be a temporary expedient.

AN. 1548. As is often the case, what was intended to satisfy both parties, pleased neither. The *Papists* exclaimed against the authority assumed without the Pope; the *Protestants* complained that all the essentials of popery were left in full force.

The politic Maurice saw through the designs of Charles, and his intention of erecting his sovereignty, on the humiliation of the princes. He was glad of an op-

portunity of redeeming his credit with the Protestant powers, among whom he still in profession numbered himself ; and he was particularly provoked by the imprisonment of his father-in-law, the Prince of Hesse, whom he had unintentionally betrayed, and whom Charles refused to release. When, therefore, on the death of Clement, and the succession of Julius, Charles had prevailed on the new pontiff to reassemble the council at Trent ; and with his army compelled the diet, held at Augsburg, to engage themselves implicitly to obey their decrees, Maurice dared to qualify his consent with conditions, judged so derogatory to the papal authority, that the Archbishop of Mentz refused to enter them on the register of the diet.

Meantime, the Protestants, at the close of the diet, commenced their preparations for whatever might happen. The brave reformers, with Melancthon and Bredtius at their head, drew up their confessions of faith to be presented to the council ; and Maurice, who merely meant to amuse the Emperor by apparent submission, prepared for effectually resisting his ambitious projects. For Charles was no more Catholic, than it is to be feared Maurice was Protestant ; but intended, in the council, which he supposed his present uncontrolled power could direct, not merely, to humble the princes of the empire, and the Protestants especially, whom he most feared, but also to set such limits to the papal jurisdiction, as would prevent the Pope from interfering with, or interrupting his schemes for securing the same despotic power in Germany and Italy, after which he aspired, as in his own hereditary dominions.

In the midst of this imaginary triumph, and self-confident security, the Emperor was surprised at Inspruck, with the sudden approach of a mighty army under Mau-

rice ; who had secretly leagued with him many German princes, and the king of France : and rushed upon the unsuspecting monarch. As he had no equal army to oppose, and was himself in danger of being taken prisoner, he was glad to obtain his safety by the PACIFICATION OF PASSAU ; containing a solemn AN. 1552. grant of perfect liberty to the princes, and the Protestant cause. The INTERIM was revoked ; all edicts against the Lutherans annulled ; the prisoners set at liberty ; and all who had suffered for the league of Smalkald, re-instated in their honors and possessions : and a certain number of Lutherans admitted into the council chamber of Spire, where justice impartial should be henceforth ministered to Protestants, as to Catholics.

Thus the very man on whom Charles had depended for the entire subversion of the Lutheran cause, became its firmest bulwark, and established it upon a basis which could no more be overturned.

A diet was to be held to confirm all these concessions. After various delays it assembled at Augsburg ; and there, after long deliberations, the equitable conditions were adjusted, which received the AN. 1555. name of THE RELIGIOUS PEACE. The Protestants were discharged from all papal jurisdiction. The states and free cities were to be unmolested, in whatever ecclesiastical establishment they chose to form—animosities were to cease—no persecutions to be admitted on account of religious opinions—and, whoever attempted to violate any of these articles, was to be treated as a disturber of the public peace. Oh that men might always be as reasonable, peaceable, and tolerant !

It is a singular event, and supported by strong authority, that this enemy of the Protestants, who had repeatedly brought their cause to the very verge of ruin, is supposed to have died in the faith he so long persecuted.—Wearied with royalty and the toils which had worn him down, Charles V. wished to end his days in holy retirement. He resigned his hereditary dominions of Spain and the Netherlands, to his son, Philip, and procured the empire for his brother Ferdinand. He had thoroughly been conversant with the subjects in dispute, and in the silence of solitude, the absence of tumultuous engagements, and the approach of death, the solemn reflections upon these important truths, which he had so often heard debated, led him to different apprehensions respecting them, from those he had before entertained. His dearest friends, and the companions of his retirement, were seized by the inquisitors, the moment their royal master closed his eyes. His preacher, his confessor, his favored bishop of Tortosa, with many others of inferior distinction or domestics, expired in flames or torture, the victims of that bloody tribunal, and of the cruel Philip, the unworthy son and successor of this mighty monarch. The vengeance they were prevented from inflicting on the master, fell on his peculiar favorites, and spoke the cause of offence.

CHAP. IV.

THE PROGRESS OF REFORMATION.

THE hope with which Henry the Eighth had inspired the Protestants, was greatly disappointed. He had separated from the Pope, but not from popery. And though the excellent Cranmer enjoyed his favor, and was supported by him against his many enemies, the cause of truth dared not lift up its head. The iron rod of power held down every bold spirit, which presumed to dispute the king's supremacy, or infallibility, just as the Pope's before. It is painful to record the tragedies performed by the malignant Gardiner and Bonner, whose compliance with the king's caprices, still left them power to persecute to death, those who presumed to advance farther in reformation than his pleasure allowed. Even Cranmer often held a precarious existence. Yet the authority of the Clergy was greatly reduced ; and the translation of the Bible, by Tyndal, afterwards a noble martyr, contributed to open men's eyes. Having fled his country to escape persecution, he finished and published his work at Antwerp, and thence dispersed the copies in England ; which wonderfully spread the light of truth. The number of ministers and people, who, through the writings of the reformers, had embraced the evangelical doctrines, was great : and some of them, as the excellent Bilney, by whom Latimer was converted, with Frith, and other worthies, fell victims to episcopal persecution, and died in flames.

AN. 1546. Happily, the death of this inhuman and capricious monarch opened a more pleasing prospect. Edward VI. his son, though very young, had drank deeply into the principles of the reformation, under the tuition of the faithful Cranmer, who, during his reign chiefly guided ecclesiastical matters, and filled the sees with men of singular zeal and piety, as Ridley, Latimer, and others. The motley mixture of the former reign now gave place to a more perfect reform ; and became nearly such, as the Church of England still professes. But the prelates, who had maintained their attachment to Rome under the former sovereign, and conformed with reluctance to the changes since established, waited impatiently for a return of the old religion, as Edward's feeble health declined, and promised a speedy demise. A short reign of felicity to the Protestant cause, was succeeded by the accession of the bloody Mary, with her popish advisers. Yet, had the cause of truth so firmly fixed itself in the land, that all the fires kindled in Smithfield, at Oxford, or elsewhere, were unable to consume the seed of the faithful ; though they destroyed many great and eminent individuals. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, were consigned to the flames ; but their blood produced a plenteous increase.

AN. 1558. MARY was a bigot and dupe to the popish party. She thought to avenge her mother's quarrels, by sacrificing every protestant to her resentments ; but the reformation had taken such root as not to be eradicated. Though the chief men in church and state were generally swayed by their interests to embrace the courtly religion, a noble army of martyrs, bishops, priests, and laymen, chose rather to die for Christ, than commit idolatry, and countenance superstition. Happily for the nation, though the mischief done

in a short time was abundant, God put a period to Mary's boody reign, and the crown devolved on Elizabeth, the daughter of the unhappy Boleyn. She inherited a portion of her mother's goodness and protestantism, though with a great measure of her father's despotism. AN. 1558.

IRELAND, which had long been as the satellite of the superior planet, and followed her revolutions, had shared in all the struggles and all the blessings of the reformation. Under Edward, and the excellent Archbishop of Dublin, Brown, the Protestant cause had completely gained the ascendant; though the wilderness of the country left the provinces distant from the capital, overrun with popery, as they are to this day. On Mary's accession, the fire of persecution began to kindle; but nearer concerns at home cast the affairs of Ireland into the back ground. At last a zealous Romanist, a Dr. COLE, was dispatched with a full commission, like Paul, the persecutor, going to Damascus, to spread slaughter over the devoted protestants. On his journey, being waited upon by the Mayor of Chester, he could not withhold boasting of the charge committed to him, and producing from his baggage a roll; "This," said he, "shall lash the heretics of Ireland into obedience."—The good woman of the house, where he lodged, heard and trembled; but acute in her wits, as zealous in the cause, she resolved to play the Doctor a trick; and as he attended the Mayor to the door, and left his boasted roll upon the table, she whipped up, and instead of the commission, she put into its place a pack of cards wrapped like it, with the knave of clubs facing the back. The doctor, as soon as the packet was ready for sailing, passed into Ireland; and in all the pomp of an inquisitor, appeared before the lord lieutenant and privy

council at the castle, ready to enter on his office. The secretary being called upon to open and read his commission, he was as much surprised as the Doctor was confounded, to find nothing but a pack of cards, and the knave of clubs facing him. The ridicule of the scene may be easily imagined. The lord lieutenant and privy council could not authorise any proceedings without a new commission; and desiring the Doctor to return to England, and hasten back, he jocularly said, that in the interim he would shuffle the cards. But before the business was dispatched, the Queen departed to give an account of herself to God, and the Doctor was left with the knave of clubs.

SCOTLAND could not fail of imbibing the spreading contagion. The Scotch, always warlike, and men of acute minds, had many of them returned from the foreign countries, where the reformation had been introduced, and brought to their native land the books and tenets of the reformers. Long had the truth struggled against the power and craft of popish tyranny; and many a martyr, and many a confessor consented to go to prison and to death, rather than abjure the faith once delivered unto the saints. No monarch had yet attempted to break the yoke, and the priest-
AN. 1559. hood was triumphant, till the intrepid Knox arose, rude as the bleak climate which gave him birth. Having formed with Calvin, at Geneva, the strictest friendship, and adopted all his opinions respecting church government, he returned to his native land; and with his rough eloquence, and hardihood that knew no fear, he bore down all opposition, overturned the whole popish hierarchy, and established the Presbyterian government in its stead, to which the church of Scotland still adheres.

THE BELGIC PROVINCES being nearer the scene of action, early received the light of gospel reformation; and none suffered more severely for their adherence to the faith, than that afflicted country. The obdurate bigot, Philip, resolved to extirpate all who refused subjection to Rome. The bloody inquisition was set up in the provinces; and the more cruel Duke of Alva,* his general, poured out the Protestant blood as water on every side. Revolt against this oppressive dominion, rent the provinces in twain. A part defied their enemies; and, in a war, of which we have but few examples maintained their liberties, and triumphed at last over their persecutors. The Dutch republic, under the famous William of Orange, stood as high in majesty against the humbled Spaniard, as they were distinguished for the purity of their religious faith and practice. *Heu quantum mutatus ab illo!* The present change is as degrading to the country, as afflictive to the mind of every true Protestant. May a phoenix rise from the ashes, and her youth be renewed as the eagle's.

SPAIN, and the Spanish dominions in Italy, had received the beam of reformation. The very doctors brought by Charles the Fifth to combat Luther, caught the fire from his lips, and carried back to their country the heresy they came to subdue. But there the bigoted monarchs, and superstitious clergy, fiercely set all their engines at work to suppress the hated innovations; and after torrents of blood shed, by martyrs innumerable; tortures, racks, and gibbets prevailed to extinguish the flame. The light of truth was clean put out, and

* It is computed that this unrelenting persecutor destroyed by various modes of torture and death, not less than an hundred thousand innocent protestants.

obscure darkness has there reigned ever since, with debasing superstition, beyond that of any other country. I include Portugal, where the same steps, under the same monarch, produced the same miserable effects, to the utter subversion of all gospel grace and truth.

The Spanish dominions in Italy shared nearly the same fate ; and though Naples would not admit the inquisition, the persecution of the reformers was equally inveterate. The brave Ochino, and the excellent Peter Martyr, exerted their zeal and eloquence : not quite in vain, but without being able to effect a national change. Compelled to fly for their lives, they took refuge in foreign lands, and watered the garden of strangers with the dew of that heavenly wisdom, which their deluded countrymen prevented from dropping on themselves.

Through all regions under papal jurisdiction, every effort of craft and cruelty was employed ; and from the Alps to the extremity of Calabria, the name of Protestant exterminated.

Thus stood the account, at last, between Protestants and Papists in Europe. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Brandenburg, Prussia, England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, all Protestant governments ; Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Belic Provinces under the Spanish yoke, all papal. Germany, with its vast dependencies divided, and nearly poised in interest between both, every state having a mixture of its opponents ; in some tolerated, in others persecuted. Switzerland divided, but the preponderating weight, and greater numbers, Protestant ; and France, more than once on the equilibrium, ready to change its dominant religion ; and at last returning to the house of bondage, though with millions of its inhabitants firm in the Protestant faith.

The numbers were still on the side of the Catholics, and their union under one visible head, greatly in their favor, politically speaking ; whilst the Protestants quickly separated into two great bodies, besides other subdivisions, at the heads of which were Luther and Melancthon on the one hand of the *Augsburg Confession*, and on the other, of the *Helvetic Confession*, were *Æcolampadius* and Calvin. These also were pretty nearly balanced. In the north Lutheranism generally prevailed. Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and the far larger part of the German Empire, followed the *Augsburg Confession* ; whilst the British Islands, Holland, Switzerland, Geneva, France, and many estates of Germany, adopted the confession of faith, which hath since obtained the name of the reformed, or Calvinistic.

CHAP. V.

ON THE LEARNING AND HERESIES OF THE TIMES.

THE general conflict, which now agitated the Christian world, contributed exceedingly to sharpen the ingenuity of the combatants ; and to excite the greatest zeal of enquiry into every branch of knowledge. And, as such seasons peculiarly rouse and bring forth the latent sparks of genius, which would otherwise lie dormant and unnoticed, never was there a more vivid light of learning displayed, and a greater number of men of the first abilities produced on the theatre of the world. Every where seminaries, and universities were endowed, erected, enlarged, and the numbers of students immense. The mode of tuition also in all Protestant countries became amazingly improved ; and all the sciences as well as theology, placed on a different footing. Aristotle, though still prevalent in the schools, was controlled from exercising his former despotic rule, by the good sense, the enlarged views, and the sound divinity of the times. The ingenious Ramus, in France, introduced a different method of reasoning, which exasperated the old partizans of the Stagyrite* ; and Paracelsus began to open the road to the higher progress of experimental philosophy, by his researches into the first elements of bodies, by fire, and solution : though still tinged with the follies of magic and alchemy, yet his chemistry led the way to all the noble improvements which have since been made.

* A name given to Aristotle from the country of his nativity.

The immense impressions of ancient classical writings, through the indefatigable labor of editors, and the happy invention of printing, spread a general diffusion of knowledge and love of the *belles lettres* through all the nations; especially those who were reformed; where science of every sort was peculiarly cultivated: and, above all, scriptural knowledge was pursued with singular avidity. Not only was the Bible now in every hand, in their native tongue; but the comments and expositions, critical and practical of the reformers, excite the approbation, and continue to promote the edification of the present day, however highly advanced in all the attainments of criticism and literature. I will only mention the Comment of Luther on the Epistle to the Galatians, as an enduring monument of sound divinity, and biblical erudition: and the Institutes of Calvin, equally admirable for their latinity. But the freedom of enquiry now introduced, in minds untaught of God, and rising on the stilts of vain imagination to a wisdom above what is written, was naturally productive of very fearful consequences. Science, when, under the controul of faith, and bowing before revelation, it presumes not to intrude into the things it hath not seen, is a blessing to the Church, and highly contributive to every thing which is excellent and of good report. But where men, vainly puffed up of their fleshly mind, suppose *that* wisdom of man which is foolishness with God, and *that* intellect, which is darkened through corruption, capable of deciding respecting truths above our apprehension, though implying no contradiction to the truest reason, then error and blasphemy come in like a flood. Revelation stands at their bar as a culprit, because, challenging implicit submission, which they are indisposed to pay; and every thing mysterious must pass through the ordeal of their philosophy, and be rejected or admitted,

only as it accords with, or differs from, their supposed infallible reason. Hence arose a numerous host of anti-christian doctors, who are still increasing; and threatening us with as fearful a deluge of false philosophy, to overwhelm the Christian name, as before it had been menaced by superstition and popery. Helvetius, Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, Gibbon, and all the infidel tribe of this day, are but the spawn of Pomponatius, Bodin, Rabelais, Montaigne, Bembo, Bruno, Taurellus, and a multitude of others, who then treated all religion with contempt and ridicule, and insinuated, that Christianity deserved no more respect than Paganism or Mahomedism; and was but a cunning fable invented by priests to enslave the minds of the credulous. These acute geniuses, indeed, did not always agree in the extent of their discoveries: some were disposed, as the followers of Socinus, to allow the Christian Savior a name among the sages deserving honor; others ridiculed the impostor, and turned his miracles into contempt: yet they professed veneration for a Supreme Being, and supposed there might be a God; whilst the more advanced in science, doubted his very being or existence, and proceeded to the summit of human wisdom, to know exactly (what the fool or wicked man wishes, and saith in his heart) that "there is no God." France, eminent in that day as in our own, singularly took the lead in this happy discovery, hid from ages and generations: yet, for a long while bending the neck under the yoke of authority, she dared not, till of late, assert the reign of liberty and atheism.

But let it be remembered, that learning is no more to be blamed for its abuse, than the sun for the venomous and poisonous reptiles hatched by his fervid beams. The revealed truths of God, so far from shunning inves-

tigation, call for the most accurate enquiry into their nature and evidence, and approve themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, whom sin hath not enslaved, and taught to reject what he *dares not believe*; and where science, falsely so called, hath not prejudiced the mind against evidence, abundantly more conclusive than any upon which the infidel builds his own system of religion, or no religion. The rationalists are mistaken if they think wisdom shall die with them.

The simplicity which is in Christ will carry conviction of the truth to the heart, in defiance of all its open or insidious enemies, and more dangerous, though pretended philosophic friends. It stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God: and as many as are ordained unto eternal life, believe to the saving of their souls. With regard to all the rest, their evil heart of unbelief is departed from the living God, and "How then," saith Christ, "can ye believe?"

CHAP. VI.

ON THE ACCESSIONS TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

IN Europe scarcely any people now remained, who had not assumed the outward profession of Christianity. Even in Finland and Lapland, thinly scattered amidst their mossy mountains, and everlasting snow, the inhabitants received from some zealous Swedish missionaries the gospel light. It is feared that some few continue in heathenism unto this day, or with such a tinge of Christianity only, as scarcely forms a shade of difference. In these inhospitable regions, magic and witchcraft have taken their last refuge.

But a vast field opened for the diffusion of the word of truth, in the discoveries made in both the Indies. The Spaniards and Portuguese, eager to extend the pale of popery as well as their own dominion, not only spread these by fire, sword, and inquisition, but enlisted under their missionary banners regiments of friars, black and white, Franciscans and Dominicans; and above all the rest, the newly instituted and more AN. 1550. specious company of Jesuits, who penetrated into the depths of America, Africa and Asia, and endeavored to erect the banner of the Cross in China and Japan. Nor were their labors without the appearance of vast success, however the religion which they taught was far removed from the truth as it is in Jesus. To me indeed, and those who think as I do, it will be a matter of doubt, whether the disciples of a Xavier, or the converts of Loyala and Dominic, with their partizans of the Romish superstition, should be admitted among

the number of Christians ; or their labors he thought to have contributed to the promotion and furtherance, or the disgrace and hindrance of the true religion of Christ. Certain it is, that the methods these men pursued tended much more to make disciples to themselves and the pontiffs of Rome, than to form the mind to the reception of evangelical truth, or the heart to the love and service of a reconciled God. And the zeal of these apostles, fiercely as it burned to make converts to their opinions, burned more fiercely in inquisitorial flames, against all who wished to worship God in the way they called heresy, and opposed their falsehood and perversion of the doctrines of the gospel, as well as condemned their idolatry and superstitious practices, as subversive of its most fundamental principles.

A feeble effort was made from Geneva, to send missionaries to America, among the poor untutored Indians : though no success appears to have followed the attempt. The settlements of the English in North America, at the latter end of the century, laid a foundation for a happier issue ; and opened that great door and effectual for the preaching the gospel which hath since been attended with such abundant success. Yet it must not be concealed and ought forever to be lamented, that settlements made with commercial views, however ultimately the means of introducing the true religion, have usually commenced with acts of oppression highly indefensible ; and with the erection of a dominion in lands to which the invaders had no just title. God can indeed bring good out of human evil, but the evil is not the less, because of the providential benefits ultimately resulting from the commerce or conquests of wicked men.

CHAP. VII.

ON THE PROGRESS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

WHEN the reformation became established, the different nations professing the Christian name divided : three great bodies, each claiming to be the *true Church*, and in general *exclusively* so, composed the Christian world. The most ancient, the *Greek Church* ; the more modern, the *Latin or Western Church* ; and the late vast rent made from it, now distinguished by the *Protestant Church*. As my object in this account, is the *Spiritual Church* of Christ, and not the formal and nominal one, which under pomp, ceremonies, and superstition had smothered all vital godliness, my chief attention will be confined to the latter. Nor therein shall I presume to find a general body of real Christians ; far from it. The faithful were ever few. The Protestants themselves, as a body, were only in *name*, what their confessions of faith should have led them to be in *reality* ; and therefore among *them*, as ever before, the *Spiritual Church* must be followed by the traces of the Cross under which it groaned, and the reproach of Christ, which ever rested upon the disciples of the Son of God ; as it must forever do on those, who, holding up the word of light, in its purity, and adorning it by a conversation becoming godliness, upbraid their fellows for their hypocrisy, and dereliction of the principles, which they have professed ; bearing witness to their deeds, that they are wrought in darkness : and thus as sharply condemning unfaithful Protestants, and apostates

from the gospel, as the idolatries of popery, and the debasements of superstition.



SECT. I.

THE GREEK CHURCH.

THIS eldest branch of Christianity still subsists, though reduced by the Mahomedan power to the lowest distress ; and deprived of all its former splendor. Every attempt to form a union with, or rather to obtain a submission to, the Roman pontiffs, constantly failed : and ended usually in mutual anathemas. After the taking of Constantinople, the glory of her patriarch faded greatly, and his dominion was equally reduced ; though he still exercised some authority over the other three great patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Russia, the present chief member of his communion, has long withdrawn herself from his obedience, and is governed by her own patriarch, who acknowledges no dependence on Constantinople. His nominal dominion, however, is still wide, extending over all the East, Greece, the isles of the Archipelago, Walachia, Moldavia, and reaching into Poland. But the very abased state of the Greeks, their ignorance, superstition, and total abandonment of all that can be reckoned worthy the name of Christian, renders their history little interesting, where the object is the enquiry into the living Church.

The divisions, that have been mentioned before, still subsisted in the eastern church. The Nestorians, and Monophysite Christians had their independent patriarchs, not under the Constantinopolitan jurisdiction; and if any real religion subsisted it was probably to be found among the Nestorians, who were said to be neither so superstitious, nor so much loaded with rites and ceremonies, as their brethren. The Jacobites, Copts, Armenians, Abyssinians, and a variety of inferior sects, were branches of one or other of these greater sects. They had their own convents, bishops, and pastors, equally jealous of their independence, and I fear in general far from every thing which could deserve the name of real godliness. The Romish missionaries have exerted their endeavors to bring over all these various sectaries to the church of Rome; and have, by influence and money, prevailed on some congregations to make profession of obedience to the Roman pontiff: on which new bishops and patriarchs have been pompously created to fill these Romish sees, under an idea of his recovered dominion. But in general it hath been an imposition; and the converts to Romanism only held in subjection whilst the cause operated, of poverty receiving support.

As impotent have been the efforts of Rome to obtain dominion over the rising nation of the Russians: all attempts in the issue proved abortive; and have for a long while been abandoned.

Whatever dignity or prerogatives are still preserved to the patriarch of Constantinople, he is obliged to purchase them dearly of the Turkish vizier. And though an election to that high office is made by the adjacent bishops, yet through the ambition of supremacy, tempting these base ecclesiastics on one hand, and the avarice

of the Turkish rulers on the other, the changes are frequent, and the see goes to the best bidder, who is sometimes hardly enthroned, before he loses his honors and purchase money, to be displaced by some other bishop, who can bribe higher.

The state of contempt, oppression, and ignorance into which they are sunk under the Mahomedan government is deplorable ; and the corruption of manners among their priests and people awfully universal : tenacious only of their miserable forms and ceremonies, in which all their Christianity consists, and strangers alike to the gospel doctrines, and the purity of godliness. The latest accounts of the Abyssinian church, by Bruce, hardly manifest a ray of true Christianity remaining. And Russia even now, has scarcely emerged from the common sink of ignorance, intemperance, and superstition.

The Lutherans at first attempted to form a union with the patriarch of Constantinople, and the wise and gentle Melancthon sent their confession of faith to him. But alas ! the pride of Greece was just as great as the pride of Rome ; and coalition with the superstitions of the one as impracticable as with the other. Since then, I believe they have been left without farther application, to the enjoyment of their own saints, relics, dignity, poverty, pride, and ignorance.

SECT. II.

THE CHURCH OF ROME.

THE right arm of popish power and dominion was cut off by the reformation. Every attempt to regain their lost authority has proved abortive. Thousands upon thousands have fallen by the sword of war, and the inquisitors ; but the fatal blow was struck, and though every effort hath been made to heal the deadly wound, it was incurable ; and Rome now seems hastening fast to final destruction.

Yet the pontifical see remained eminent in power, wealth and dignity ; and lorded it, though not with such despotic power as before, over the nations under its obedience. A new model was formed for the political management of its interests ; and though none of its pretensions were abated, a general council was still supposed by many to be paramount over all the Christians in the Roman pale. However, the infallibility of the holy see became better secured by a previous consultation with the principal cardinals, in matters of religious controversy ; which prudence now made necessary, before any bull issued. A variety of separate *congregations* were established, for different branches of business, among which one *for relics* is not forgotten ; that all matters might be transacted with the profoundest policy, and occasions prevented for Protestant accusations. And in these *congregations* many things were carried, and adopted in opposition to the opinion of the infallible head.

The monarchs of Europe gained greatly by the reformation. The fulminations of the pontifical see lost all the momentum, that had before made the strongest Colossus to tremble. It was seen in the case of the English King, how dangerous it was to provoke those who could so easily avenge themselves. And therefore the pontiffs cautiously contented with assuming the same power, made a virtue of their clemency in not exerting it. As they could proceed no longer in the way of open war, it became more needful to provide secret, but mighty agents to prop up the pillars of their tottering throne. The mendicant tribes had rather fallen into disgrace, and some of their branches had given much vexation to the holy see, as the Fratricelli. Auxiliaries were wanted, who should unite learning zeal, and genius, with the most devoted submission to Rome and her pontiffs; whose abilities might introduce them into the cabinets of monarchs as confessors; whose science might dispel ignorance from the schools; and whose unlimited obedience might render them proper tools, to spread as missionaries, the Roman supremacy, through the old world and the new: exactly such were found in the *order of Jesuits*. The fanatic, but intrepid Loyala was their founder; and the Roman see adopted AN. 1550. them with cordial affection, as its devoted satellites; imposing on them, among other common vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, an additional engagement, "to hasten without hesitation to any part of the earth, and for any purpose, which the pontiff should enjoin them." For this end, a choice selection was made, of the most ingenious, the most learned, the most adroit, and the best skilled in mechanic arts, as well as mathematics, painting, and philosophy. Their zeal and activity roused the slumbering Franciscans and Dominicans to jealousy. They buckled on their armor

afresh, and sharpened their weapons to contest the palm of victory with their brethren of the new fraternity ; and in nothing yield to them in devotion, and loyalty to the holy see.

The accommodating manners of this new order ; their profound dissimulation ; their artful insinuation into the courts of princes, and the secrets of men ; their penetration in the discovery of the best means of effecting their purposes ; and their easiness in relaxing the severity of penance and morals, according to the rank of the penitent ; soon procured them universal preference. All the malice and envy of their brethren, though exerted to bring them into suspicion, and to diminish their influence, was abortive. The favor of Rome, but much more their own policy and cunning, preserved and increased the credit of the order, and raised it to the summit of eminence, above all their fellows ; an eminence they long maintained : and by their activity and artifice supported and enlarged the bounds of the papal jurisdiction.

Yet in the vigor of youth, and the zenith of their prosperity, the good archbishop of Dublin, Brown, ventured to pronounce their doom with a precision approaching prophecy. After speaking in his sermon of the wondrous progress the Jesuits were making in the world, and which their very constitution was formed to produce, he adds, but, " God shall suddenly call off this society, even by the hand of those who have most succoured them, and made use of them, so that at the end they shall become odious to all nations. They shall have no resting place upon earth, and a Jew shall have more favor than a Jesuit." The appointed time came. The Roman power itself is humbled to the dust, and to this nothing more has contributed than the

destruction of this very order by the papal see itself. A.D. 1773.

A variety of other *orders* arose, whose names I shall only mention, without their particularities, the *Theatines*, *Barnabites*, *Fathers of Somasque*, *Priests of the Oratory*, &c. all professing to revive the ancient sanctity of manners, and to exhibit a purer model than the debased state of the monastic orders, and the clergy in general afforded. This decline was a favorite topic of the reformers. Indeed their rebukes, I may call them invectives, roused the whole sacerdotal tribe to a greater decency of conduct. The inferior clergy at least, put on a face of gravity, and external sobriety and seriousness; and the different *orders* entered upon various reforms; a proof how much they were needed. Hence arose the new branch of Franciscans, who adopted the rigorous rules of St. Francis, and bear the name of *Capuchins* from the additional cowl added to their habit; which innovation offended highly many of their brethren; but was confirmed by the Pope, and continues the badge of their order.

So far indeed the church of Rome itself highly profited by the reformation. The honor of their vocation, and the desire to remove the reproaches of the Lutherans, produced much more beneficial effects than all the canons of the council of Trent. Nor less did the same cause operate, in stimulating them to excell in literature; wherein the Jesuits set an admirable example. Indefatigable in pursuit of knowledge themselves, they became the preceptors to others, in all polite literature, as well as theological learning. Still adhering however to Aristotelian subtleties in dispute, in order to puzzle adversaries, whom they could not confute. Hence the Romish church furnished a host of men, high in re-

putation for attainments in science of every kind. And thus they were as much indebted to the reformation, for the revival of literature, as for the amendment of their morals.

Yet this amendment rather reached the inferior than the superior clergy. The popes themselves, though more decent in general than before, continued many of them to dishonor the high station in which they were placed, and shewed themselves as much beyond shame as above controul. In the beginning of the century, Pius the Third, had, besides other acts of atrocity charged upon him, raised his two bastard sons, in their infancy, to be cardinals. And his successor, Julius the Third, was no sooner seated on the throne of St. Peter, than he placed the red hat on the head of the boy, who was the keeper of his monkies, and the object of his infamous passion.

The greater bishops, whose immense revenues afforded them all the magnificence of earthly grandeur, displayed few of the features of the lowly Nazarene. Many of them princes of the empire, exhibited all the pomp of majesty, as well as the luxury. And the courts of monarchs attached the prelates in general, more than their dioceses; to which they regarded it as a kind of banishment, to be confined. Yet upon the whole throughout the papal pale, there was a considerable change for the better in the manners of the clergy; and they became in general less profligate and their minds better informed.

AN. 1545. The council of Trent had assembled to ascertain the *doctrines*, restore the *discipline*, and correct the *manners* of the Church; To all which it applied but ineffectual and miserable remedies. Though the papal

powers swayed all the deliberations, and the legates dictated the decrees, still the popes arrogated to themselves the sole right of *interpreting them*. And for that purpose, an especial *congregation* at Rome was appointed. So that after all the pretences of the council's deliberation and decision, it remained with the pontiff to enforce what he approved, and to interpret the rest according to his own pleasure and interest. Thus after the farce of many years assembling and debating, all depended still upon the great interpreter. It was impossible therefore, that any other result would spring from all this wondrous body of collected wisdom, than just what we see, the maintenance of the despotic power of the Roman prelate, and the confirmation of all past abuses, with the addition of many more.

I shall not enter into the decrees of this council, which would carry me too far, and shall only observe that its decisions were admitted only partially in some states, and with modifications and salvoes, in others. Nor did its determinations put an end to the disputes of Catholics among themselves, any more than prove in the least satisfactory or convincing to the Protestants. Their boasted *unity* of doctrine was very weak indeed : and the reproach cast on the Protestants, and their differences of opinion, and which indeed they deserved for their religious disputes, was as applicable to the papists themselves. Franciscans against Dominicans, and Thomists against Scotists, maintained unceasing battle. The bishops contended for their divine right and jurisdiction against the Pope, who denied them both, but as a favor of the holy see. The Gallican church maintained her liberties against papal encroachments ; and all on this side the mountains, exalted the supremacy of general councils above the Roman see. The Jesuits drew up-

on themselves the keenest invectives of the Benedictines and others, for their impudent encroachments, and suspicious morality. Matters of the greatest moment continued to be disputed, nor could all the efforts of the pontiffs compel or induce the angry combatants to silence. The power and jurisdiction of the see of Rome, the subjects of the Catholic church—the nature, necessity, and efficacy of grace—the principles of morals—the operation of the sacraments—the best mode of Christian instruction—These, and many other points, were disputed with abundant acrimony.

The council of Trent made no alteration in rites and ceremonies. Many indeed desired a reformation in the grosser abuses ; but this was touching priestcraft in a tender part. The papal legates and their party therefore warded off the blow. Idolatry, images, relics, frauds, maintained their ground. Indeed where the Protestants are still numerous, or their proximity makes more circumspection needful, the more offensive acts of idolatry, and the grosser frauds are avoided. But in the more enslaved countries of Romanism, in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and their colonies, there superstition still reigns triumphant, and fraud and folly appear without a blush. The blood of St. Januarius regularly liquefies ; and the milk of the Virgin is as fresh as if it had been just drawn from her breasts in Palestine.

The Bible was one of the forbidden books which the people might not consult without permission. And no man must comment on the Scriptures, even in private, in any way different from the language of the Church : nor print without a license. So truly is the key of knowledge reserved by the popes in their own custody. And wherever their imperious decrees are obeyed, the Holy Scriptures are a book sealed, and all divine knowl-

edge confined to the miserable mass and breviary, and such wretched discourses as serve to fix the ignorance of divine things more inveterate, by inspiring confidence in their own deceived and deceiving spiritual guides.

It was ridiculous enough, that in this wise assembly, the *Vulgate*, the ancient Latin translation of the Bible then in use, though full of the grossest mistakes and deviations from the original, was consecrated for ever as the only *authentic* and *perfect* translation ; and withal it was determined, that this version should be *accurately revised* and *corrected*, and a *new edition, published by authority* ; and this too *was never done* ; so that the people were left in the strangest situation imaginable, and the teachers themselves in circumstances the most embarrassing : compelled to use as a consecrated translation, from which they may not depart, a version confessedly in need of correction ; and promised a new edition still more perfect, which was never taken in hand.

The state of pure religion in a Church so corrupt, even in the fountain head itself, may easily be conceived : where all godliness consisted in implicit obedience to the holy see, and exact attention to the formularies of devotion, the performance of penance, and the purchase of indulgences. Yet we must not suppose that the whole body was utterly destitute of the life of Christianity. Amidst all the prevailings of iniquity, and the servitude of superstition, the writings of some of those who were called *mystical divines*, shew, that they cultivated still the religion of the heart ; and however debased by prejudice and error, supposed the life of godliness to consist in a state of conscious favor and communion with God ; producing real purity of mind, and holiness of conversation. But it must be confessed, these were few and hidden : in silence and retirement, they avoided obser-

vation, and therefore escaped the charge of heresy, which would have certainly fastened upon them, if they had not been content to keep their religion to themselves. Jesuitical religion, inquisitorial religion, the established religion of popery, will allow us to look to such a religion with abhorrence only, and no hope.

We turn therefore to a more pleasing scene, the Church reformed from the abominations of popery ; not but that we shall find therein much to lament, and much to condemn. Yet, there the living body subsisted of pure religion, and undefiled ; therein we shall discover genuine Christianity ; and though small, a seed that shall be to the Lord for a generation, the remnant according to the election of grace.



SECT. III.

ON THE CHURCH REFORMED FROM THE ERRORS OF
POPERY.

I AM entering on a subject, in which it is difficult to maintain that absolute impartiality which is so desirable ; and not to be warped into misrepresentation by educational prejudices. To have a decided opinion in a matter so momentous, as regards the salvation of men's souls, is our duty, and highly approvable : but, though a Protestant, I will pledge myself intentionally not to deceive : and will speak the truth as far as I know it, whether respecting Protestant or Papist, or the different

denominations among ourselves, without hiding the blemishes of my own. I can truly aver, I seek simply truth, as it is revealed in the Bible : and I mean to embrace it in a profession open and undisguised, of whatever I find in the Scripture, respecting the doctrine or discipline of the true Church : and wherever I am mistaken in my representations, my ears are open to conviction, and my pen ready to correct unintentional errors.

The body of Protestants who separated from the Romish communion, may be comprised under three grand divisions. In each of these a variety of shades of difference, in doctrine and discipline, will be found. The *Lutheran*—the *Calvinist*—and the *Heterodox*—or such as departed from their brethren in those articles of faith, which both the others had laid down as fundamentals, and essential to salvation.

I. THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

THE great reformer, Luther, left his name, as the mark of union in that Church, which was in a peculiar manner indebted to his labors. We have seen its rise, through the intrepid opposition of an Augustin monk, to the papal abuses : the exclusion of those who adhered to him from the Roman pale, by the excommunication of Leo X ; the vigorous struggle, till the *Confession of Augsburg* ; when it began to grow into its present form ; its final emancipation from all pontifical authority ; and its legal independence established by the *pacification of Passau* ; and, lastly, by the *peace of Augsburg*.

The leading principle of the reformation is, that THE BIBLE ALONE CONTAINS THE RELIGION OF PROT-

ESTANTS, which every man is to read and consider ; and thence alone to draw all the articles of his faith and practice : and nothing is binding upon the conscience, but what is there clearly revealed or necessarily deducible from the scripture declarations. These are generally admitted principles ; but the Protestant Churches have severally differed in the application of some of them, and manifested a most blameable bigotry and severity towards their brethren, in enforcing their own interpretations of the scripture ; and, that often times according to their own acknowledgements, in matters not essential to salvation.

To maintain nearer union of sentiment and worship among themselves, each Church has adopted particular confessions and formularies, which have been laid down as necessary to communion with that body : and thus hath often contracted grievously the circle of exclusion respecting their brethren, who hold with them one head Christ, and one faith in all essential articles.

The Lutheran doctrine is avowed to be comprised in the *Augsburg Confession* ; and in Melancthon's *Apolo-
gy* for it, in reply to the popish objections ; these are regarded as of first authority : though it must be confessed, some of the opinions respecting the real presence in the Eucharist, are far more objectionable, in the *Apolo-
gy* than in the *Confession*. The *articles of Smalcald*, drawn up by Luther, with a view to heal, if possible, the disputes raised, have softened down some of the harsher expressions of the *Augsburg Confession* ; and with the *catechisms* of the great Master, are received in that church as directorial. Whilst the *form of concord*, asserting the *ubiquity* of Christ's human body, and the *real presence* in the sacrament with the brand of heresy, and the sentence of excommunication fixed upon all

who did not receive these dogmas, though it was strongly maintained and supported by the more rigid Saxon divines of the Lutheran persuasion, was as warmly disputed, and rejected, by the more moderate.

The leading doctrines of the Augsburg Confession are, *the true and essential divinity of the Son of God.*

His substitution and vicarious sacrifice ; and

The necessity, freedom, and efficacy, of divine grace upon the human heart.

Where God, the Son, is thus known, as a real Saviour to the uttermost ; and God the Spirit acknowledged in the experience of his influence on the conscience, why should any thing afterwards be permitted to break the bands of union between those who have been admitted to *friendship with God* ?

Respecting the government of the Church and its forms, it is admitted universally among the Lutherans, that the Supreme Ruler of the State, is the head of all authority, in what relates to causes ecclesiastical as well as civil ; and, that the Church is subject to the powers that are established : though no power has authority to alter the revealed word of God, or to impose upon the conscience arbitrarily its own dictates—consent, not constraint, must form Christian union. The forms therefore of religion to be observed, though generally such as had been before in the Church, were purged from superstition and error ; and these forms not so uniformly prescribed, but that some have retained rites, which others have rejected without a breach of unity of spirit ; as they agree that indifferent things shall be left indifferent.

This is singularly evident in the mode of ecclesiastical government established in the Lutheran Church. In Sweden it continues to be episcopal. In Norway the

same. In Denmark, under the name of *superintendent*, all episcopal authority is retained. Whilst, through Germany, the superior power is vested in a *consistory*, over which there is a president, with a distinction of rank and privileges, and a subordination of inferior clergy to their superiors, different from the parity of Presbyterianism.

Though the same liturgical form is not every where observed, the leading features of worship are alike. The public service on the Lord's day is universal ; and occasional worship at other times. The holy Scriptures are every where read in the mother tongue—Prayer, without a liturgy, though after a directory, is offered to God in Christ—with praise in psalms and hymns—Sermons are regularly preached for general instruction—Catechising used for the rising generation—The Lord's supper is celebrated frequently, by all, who, after examination of the minister, are judged intelligent and admissible. The great transactions of our Lord are commemorated at the usual seasons ; and some Lutheran churches observe festivals, which others have not admitted.

The article of church censures, so much abused and so much neglected, was by the Lutheran regulation lodged with the clergy and courts of their superintendence ; and in consequence of abuses on the one hand of this spiritual power, and contempt on the other of its censures, this branch of discipline is in a very degraded state ; and the more corruption multiplies in manners, the less ability is there to restrain it. Indeed, in the Lutheran, as in the Anglican church, the personal influence of a good example, and the zealous discharge of the ministerial office, will do more to awe offenders and revive discipline, than any sentences pronounced in

spiritual courts. Perhaps the feeling complaints so often uttered of the want of all discipline, would be most effectually removed, if those who made them, set themselves more zealously, and faithfully to warn the unruly, to instruct the ignorant, to restore the fallen; and in preaching and living, to set forth the true apostolic doctrine and practice. Their rebukes would make the proudest tremble; and the uniformity of their conversation give authority to their exhortations.

The Lutheran Church had, by the peace of Augs-
burg, gained a first establishment; but the very con-
tract which had secured its liberty, checked its progress;
as no prelate, dignitary, or other ecclesiastic, could
come over to this faith and worship, without the forfeit-
ure of all his ecclesiastical preferment. To this the
Archbishop of Cologne was obliged to submit; prefer-
ring a wife and Lutheranism to his archbishopric,
which he was compelled to resign. However, the sted-
fast abettors of this faith, zealous for the truths they held,
disappointed all the open and secret attacks of their ad-
versaries, to bring them back to the house of their pris-
on, and firmly stood their ground; producing a noble
army of defendants, men of the highest eminence for liter-
ature, as well as zeal and devotedness to Christ. Among
them, Melancthon, Carlostadt, Camerarius,* Flaccus and
Chemnitz, deservedly hold the first places. By these,
learning in all its branches was promoted and cultivated.

* Camerarius was an exceedingly learned German, born 1500. Vossius calls him "the Phenix of Germany. He died 1575.—
New Biog. Dict. Flaccus or Flacius was a minister of Magde-
burg. He is called by Mosheim "The Parent of Ecclesiastical
History." Chemnitz (Martin) was a learned Lutheran Divine,
born at Britzen in Brandenburg, 1521. He was the Author of
an Examination of the Council of Trent, an ingenious work.

The miserable scholastic theology was greatly exploded by Luther and his noble associates, from a conviction of its barren and unfruitful nature, and a more rational mode of investigation of the divine truths introduced, where the Bible, not Aristotle, prevailed. Yet they despised not the fair deductions of syllogistic reasoning, whilst they wished to banish the jargon of terms, and the subtilties of sophisms, which tended merely to puzzle, instead of elucidating the subject.

The *Theosophists*, disciples of Parcellus, addicted to chymistry and the solution of bodies into their first principles, with the most diligent experiments, joined enthusiastic ideas of inward illumination, as the means of arriving at discoveries, above the native reach of human faculties. Hoffman, and the famous Behman, were the leaders of this school. An air of singular piety and mystic devotion engaged a number of disciples; and names, highly respectable, are mentioned as favorers of them, such as Arnd and Wegelius.

As theological science was peculiarly pursued, many eminent expositors of Scripture appeared; none more revered than the great Reformer himself, from whose sentiments it is to be justly lamented that his disciples have so greatly departed: and whilst they honor him with such singular devotion, dispute the most implicit and characteristic doctrines of his theology; of which I have given a specimen from Luther's tract against Erasmus. I may quote an acknowledgement of this, from the translator of Mosheim, whether to the honor or disgrace of Lutheranism, let every impartial judge determine. "The doctrines of *absolute predestination*, *irresistible grace*, and *human impotence*, were never carried to a more excessive length, nor maintained with a more virulent obstinacy, by any divine than they were

by Luther ; but in these times he has very few followers in this respect, even among those who bear his name." Of whom Dr. Mosheim also says, " That the doctrine of the Lutheran church hath changed by degrees its original form, and been improved and perfected in many respects, especially in the doctrines of *free will, predestination, and other points*, in which the Lutheran systems of divinity of an earlier date are so far surpassed by those of modern times." Perhaps theological doctors in this matter may still differ, and prefer the *ancient truths* to *modern improvements* ; nor think the lengths, to which Luther carried them, *excessive*, nor his defence of them either *virulent* or *obstinate*. Certain it is, that if there be any thing in Lutheranism peculiarly excellent, they plead for it with a very bad grace, who, in points of such importance, differ from their leader, and impeach his wisdom and his zeal in defence of what he at least esteemed of the greatest consequence. If Bosluet and the papal writers reproached them for their variations from their great Reformer, who can dare to say, there is not a cause ?

The doctrine of *justification by faith alone*, had never a clearer expositor than Luther ; the plain and literal sense of the Scripture he adhered to as to be always followed, in preference to all allegorical and fanciful interpretations ; and his morals were as pure as his doctrines were evangelical. Nor can I by any means think, either Luther or Melancthon defective, as has been suggested, for not giving a *regular system of morality*, when, it is acknowledged, by those who presume to censure them, that they gave the fullest practical rules and instructions under the heads of *law, sin, free-will, faith, hope, and charity*. All other morals that spring not from these Christian principles, I presume they disclaimed and disdained.

Whatever faults men were pleased to find with Luther's doctrine on the points above mentioned, when he was dead, none murmured disapprobation among the host of his followers, whilst he was alive. In the nature of the Eucharist, Carlostadt had dared to differ from him, and to be in the right ; in the rest they were unanimous. It must be admitted, that Luther was a sharp disputant, and hardly brooked opposition—that the summit of the eminence, to which he was deservedly advanced, might make him jealous—or treat those who differed from him with too much asperity. He was a man of vehement spirit ; the times were rude ; and differences of opinion were not met with the candor and politeness of more modern days. I mean not this to excuse what is condemnab'e, but as a caution not to judge him rashly, if his zeal at any time appears to overslep the bounds of temperance. He was a man, a sinful man, a man of like passions with other corrupted creatures ; exposed to peculiar provocations, and of a temper naturally irascible. Let those who blame him avoid his mistakes, and imitate his excellences.

I have before spoken of his harsh treatment of Carlostadt, whom his interest with the Elector drove from his native land ; and whatever was pretended as the cause, the real one may be found in their disputes about the Eucharist. The same difference of opinion produced his displeasure against Schwendkfeldt, a Saxon nobleman, of eminent piety and abilities, who, inclining more to the simplicity of Zuinglius, and professing his opposition to the errors of Luther in this point of doctrine, experienced the same harsh treatment from his sovereign, and was driven into banishment.

AN. 1538. His dispute with his disciple Agricola, on the moral law and its obligations, respected a subject of

more importance than the ideas of *real presence*. Carrying his views of the abolition of the Mosaical obligations, to the moral, as well as the ceremonial law, Agricola pleaded, that we were no longer under it, as our rule of obedience, but under the gospel, as a nobler dispensation of faith working by love. From this man the term *Antinomian* became applied to those who followed this idea ; and some are said to have pushed the doctrine to the support of the most dissolute and immoral practices, as perfectly compatible with a state of union with Christ. But this certainly was not the case with Agricola, and many others, that have been charged with Antinomian principles ; who, however they may speak disparagingly of the law, as binding Christian men, would disclaim the horrid conclusions which their adversaries have presumed to draw for them. Luther's vigilance and zeal engaged Agricola either to explain himself, or to retract what was erroneous in his positions, and he continued in his ministry.

But though Luther's personal weight, aided by his vehemence, and supported by the Protestant princes, who so highly revered him, contributed to maintain an appearance of unity in the Lutheran Church, and to crush every attempt at innovation in the established opinions ; yet no sooner were his eyes closed than it appeared evident, that in several points his dearest friends thought differently from him. The commanding authority, and warmth of Luther in a sort overawed the gentle, but most learned Melancthon. He would not start a subject of dispute : his spirit was yielding and conceding to a fault. No marvel he shunned the least opposition to his admired friend. When his master was taken from his head, and he became the leader of the Saxon ecclesiastical establishment, he would have pur-

chased peace with Rome by tolerating, and submitting to, what Luther would have rejected with abhorrence. He could be even content to soften down the very doctrine which the great reformer placed as the criterion, *stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*, of the true or apostate church ; and to admit some modification of *justification by faith alone*, by abating something from man's absolute incapacity to promote his own conversion unto God, and allowing the necessity of good works for salvation. Though he had been silent on the controversy of the Eucharist, and before coincided with Luther ; he latterly could not receive the strong ideas of *real presence*, suggested by his friend, but wished at least the definition might be left so ambiguous, as to admit those who adopted the opinion of *symbol only*, in the Eucharist, to friendly communion. No sooner had he therefore ventured to promulge openly, what he had before either suppressed or only modestly hinted, than the rigid Lutherans rose in arms against him. And those disturbances began, which to a man of his temper and feeling must have been peculiarly painful.

The first grand occasion of division in the Lutheran Church, arose from the reference made to Melancthon and other Saxon divines, on the subject of the imperial decree, called *the Interim*, and how far they could submit to it. His pacific spirit counting no sacrifices too great for peace, persuaded acquiescence in all matters of *indifference*, to the Emperor's edict. But in these indifferent matters, he reckoned doctrines of deep and essential consequence, in the eyes of Luther and his true followers, particularly in the *article of justification*. And as yielding was he respecting *ceremonies* and *papal jurisdiction* ; which the great reformer would have spurned with abhorrence. No wonder therefore that Luther's most zealous disciples, with the learned

Flaccus at their head, charged these accommodating divines with betrayal of the truth, and with apostacy from the vital principle of Lutheranism.

A sharp controversy therefore arose, concerning what could be called *indifferent*; and what ought, or ought not, to be yielded to Rome. This naturally led to points of the first consequence, respecting faith—good works—the prevention of grace—the co-operation of the human will—in all which Melancthon expressed himself in a language that Luther would have rejected with indignation. Since nothing could be farther from his sentiments than modification on any of these objects, respecting which he had declared himself in the most explicit manner. Nor would Melancthon's explication, that the *impressions of grace were accompanied with certain correspondent actions of the human will*, have been borne for a moment by the great master: and if not branded as absolutely heretical, by Flaccus, and his adherents, at least they exposed Melancthon and his followers to heavy charges of semi-pelagianism: to which no doubt such modes of expression led. They excited also just apprehensions, that even more was intended than expressed, under such unknown terms, in the nomenclature of Lutheran orthodoxy.

AN. 1557. Flaccus, the chief, in that amazing work of ecclesiastical learning, "the Magdeburg Centuriators," was advanced to the chair of divinity of Jena, by the zealous Lutheran sons of the deprived elector John, who had formed this seminary with a view to maintain inviolate the pure doctrines of the great reformer. This gave him scope, as it more immediately called him to defend the master, and to attack his opposers. Thus the breach widened, and a schism was apprehended between the free grace, and the semi-pelagian Lutherans.

AN. 1560. Strigelius, the disciple of Melancthon, maintained at Jena, in opposition to Flaccus, the free-will doctrine, and man's co-operation in conversion. For this he was accused by the professor to the duke, imprisoned and compelled to recant; or at least appear to do so, in order to obtain his discharge. It is grievous to observe, that the true Protestant principles were so little followed; and each side courted the arm of civil power to aid the force of their arguments. I wave entering on other controversies of less important subjects, which disturbed the peace of the Lutheran Church, and were sure to give occasion of triumph and reproach to their popish adversaries.

During the life of Melancthon, the contest raged; nor was it quieted by his decease. His son-in-law Peucer, a man as respectable for his learning, as eminent for piety, a professor at Wittenberg, had formed a considerable party among the Saxon divines, AN. 1571. who adopted with him the sentiments of Zuinglius, respecting the Eucharist, in preference to those of Luther; and to which Melancthon in his latter years acceded. These they wished to introduce into the Saxon Church; and to alter the established doctrine of *the real presence*. A solemn convocation of divines was held at Dresden on the subject; and a formula of agreement drawn up, favorable to AN. 1571. the friends of Peucer, and denying the ubiquity of Christ's human body. At this the rigid Lutherans fired, and gaining the elector, under the dreaded apprehensions, that the foundations of Lutheranism were ready to be overturned, a new convention at Torgaw, established the *real presence*, AN. 1574. and instigated the elector to seize, imprison, and banish, all the secret Calvinists; and to

reduce their followers by every act of violence, to renounce their sentiments, and confess the *ubiquity*. Ten years did the oppressed Peucer suffer imprisonment, in the severest manner, for his opinions : and proved, that persecution was not peculiar to popish ecclesiastics. Effectually to eradicate this dreaded innovation, and drive from Saxony and the Lutheran pale, all who inclined to the Helvetic opinion respecting Christ's body in the sacrament, the same divines who had drawn up the *decrees of Torgaw*, produced the *form of* AN. 1577. *concord*, in which, the *real manducation* of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist was established, and heresy and excommunication laid on all who refused this, as an article of faith ; with pains and penalties to be enforced by the secular arm. The bigoted Saxon established this *form of concord*, through the extent of his authority ; and many other Lutheran churches adopted it. But what was pretended as a means of terminating this controversy, produced more violent dissensions than ever. All the Calvinistic or reformed party, lifted up their voices against such a decision, not only as unscriptural in itself, but as tending in the strongest manner to preclude all Christian union between real Protestants. The favorers of the Zuinglian notions of the Eucharist, felt the severity of the edicts. The moderate Lutherans themselves abhorred such hasty censures. The friends and disciples of the amiable Melancthon could not bear to see his sentiments thus treated : and from a variety of motives, the *form of concord* was rejected by a considerable, if not the larger part of the Lutheran Church. Nor in Saxony itself was there wanting a vast number, who though compelled to suppress their opinions, waited only the favorable moment to shew themselves. This the death AN. 1586. of the elector Augustus afforded, and his suc-

cessor being more favorable to the moderate Lutherans, they attempted to suppress the *form of concord*, and *Crel. lius*, the first minister being on their side, they prepared the people for the change they meditated, by lesser alterations, such as the omission of *exorcism* which had been used in baptism; by a *catechism*, favorable to the Calvinistic opinions; and by a *new edition of the Bible*. But the rigid Lutherans, exactly like *our High church* and *Sacheverel for ever*, caught fire at these unhallowed changes, making the nation think the Church in danger; and the clergy, inflaming the populace, produced much tumult, and sharp interference of the magis-

AN. 1591. tracy. The tables turned on the death of the elector Christian I. The rigid Lutherans resumed their empire, and their adversaries were imprisoned and banished. The *form of concord* was restored to its vigor, and the unhappy Crellius, who had been the great support of the party, put to death. On such juridical execution of Protestants by Protest.

AN. 1601. ants, originating in disputes, about religious opinions, if I could, I would fix a brand of reprobacy; and lift up my feeble voice against persecution of every kind. But I am conscious, whilst men are as they are, church power will always be abused, and unchristian intolerance wish to kindle the flames against all who may venture to differ from the dominant party. Indeed the most unlike the great Head of the Church are they, who thrust themselves into high places; and whose pride and insolence are gratified in trampling upon their brethren. Ye followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, mark the man, that hates and injures his brother for his opinions: he is a murderer,* in whatever church he is found.

* A strong expression. The careful Reader will undoubtedly put such a construction upon this, and similar passages as truth

The doctrines of Luther, on predestination and grace, were too uncongenial to the pride and wisdom of the unhumbled heart, not to excite strong opposition. Huber, of Wittenberg, distinguished himself in defence of the plan of *universal redemption*, which has been since generally adopted in the Lutheran Church, but in those purer days of evangelical doctrine, provoked just indignation, and occasioned his deposition and banishment. Violence on all sides was carried to the extreme. The man who subscribes an established doctrine justly forfeits his advantages, when he renounces the ground of his tenure : but let him live as free as his brethren, and defend his sentiments in love, and in the spirit of meekness. The misery is, that in all these unhappy disputes, human passions rage, instead of the simple pursuit of truth and godliness.

To conclude ; in the Lutheran Church were found men *great* in every view ; in erudition and piety. But as must be the case universally, the multitude were only believers in the lump. The generality of clergy in every established church, enter it as a profession ; and are too like their fellows in all worldly pursuits, and human passions. The faithful and really godly are every where comparatively few, who serve the Lord Christ out of a pure heart fervently, and regard their work as wages. I doubt not the living members of Christ's body, within the Lutheran pale, in that day were many and glorious. At the first dawn of reformation, strict piety was more universally cultivated among the professors : but declensions early crept in with a peaceable

will justify. A malignant and cruel intolerance deserves to be branded with reproach ; but from this, a virtuous contest with error in material points, which must refuse communion with its betters, ought to be carefully distinguished.

establishment ; and when no longer under the cross, the departure from truth and purity, presently appeared. Before the close of the century, Mosheim acknowledges, that, “ the manners of the Lutherans were remarkably depraved—that multitudes offended the public, by audacious irregularities—that discipline vanished, either through the carelessness or impotence of the clerical arm.” And those who distinguished themselves from their brethren, by greater zeal, purity of doctrine, deadness to the world, heavenly mindedness, and spirituality of conversation, were marked, and gained a name of peculiarity, that separated them from their fellows, content to bear a testimony, by their lives and labors, to a kingdom neither Lutheran nor Calvinist exclusively, but consisting in righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost : the true Spirit of the Church universal, which is neither of Paul, nor of Apollos, but of Christ.

II. OF THE CHURCHES CALLED REFORMED, OR CALVINISTIC.

THE name of *Protestants*, equally applied to all dissenters from the church of Rome. As these separated into different communities, they were distinguished by different denominations ; the term *reformed Church* was therefore appropriated to those who, differing from the Lutheran opinions in points of doctrine or discipline, preferred, especially in the great articles respecting the real presence in the Eucharist, the doctrine of Zuinglius and Calvin to that of Luther. And as Calvin was the most eminent, the several churches who adopted his sentiments, generally bore his name, as the Lutherans that of their great reformer, Not that Luther or Calvin pretended to support any doctrines, but what they de-

duced from the Scriptures, and confirmed by the evidence of the fathers, especially Augustin. The Calvinistic churches, though united in the confession of the same fundamental articles of faith, in which indeed, the only union essential is to be sought, were formed on very different models; and chiefly followed the several forms of government, which subsisted in the countries where the reformation prevailed, and the different views which the rulers in different nations entertained of the most scriptural church order. For from the New-Testament and the apostolic precedents; all professed to derive their several establishments. The greater body adopted the model of the Helvetic churches, and especially of Geneva, where Calvin presided, and had a chief influence over all those of the reformed profession. Switzerland, Germany, France, Scotland, Holland, and all the foreign Calvinistic churches erected the form of government called *Presbyterian*, in which a parity of rank was established among the ministers themselves; a *synodical* government, consisting of clergy and laity, elected to manage the concerns of the particular churches; and a general assembly of the whole church to decide on momentous cases, in each of their several dominions or districts. Yet this establishment was not exactly similar in any two churches, who held the same confession of faith, and maintained in the general outline, the same form of discipline and government.

The churches of England and Ireland chose to retain *episcopacy* in their government, as in their apprehension more congenial with monarchical government, and primitive practice; whilst in all the great articles of faith, they held with their foreign brethren, and maintained communion with them. This Church formed a body, resembling the state, sitting in two houses of con-

vocation, under the same head, where all the great concerns ecclesiastical were to be settled, with the consent of the monarch.

In ceremonies, the reformed churches differed greatly. The first and great reformer Zuinglius, who began before Luther, his bold attack of popery, carried his reform far beyond him. Whilst Luther tolerated images, tapers, altars, exorcism, and auricular confession, *he* swept all the trappings of superstition away; reducing the worship to the standard of utmost simplicity, divested alike of garb or ornament. The other churches have admitted some ceremonies; the episcopal churches the most, as more conformed to the dignity of the hierarchy. The spirit of devotion hardly needs the adventitious helps which formality supposes important. Yet who will refuse his approbation of whatever may have a real tendency to enliven the worship, or engage the attention? Such surely will music be found, when under proper regulation.

Zurich, the cradle of the reformed, professed in the article of the Lord's Supper, the simple acknowledgment of its being a *sign* and nothing more, according to the opinion of Zuinglius, and his excellent and able associate *Æcolampadius*. Herein the Lutherans were at too great a distance to approach, and all efforts of conciliation proved abortive. As this was a matter of first concern in that day, it may be useful to observe the gradations of opinion on this subject, among the churches.

ZUINGLIUS and his followers regarded the Eucharist as a mere *sign* or *symbol*, of which all professing Christians, whether regenerate, or unregenerate, might partake alike.

CALVIN supposed the *sign* or *symbol* to convey a sacramental pledge of blessing, and that a *spiritual presence*

of Christ attended it to the regenerate and believing only ; whilst to others the elements remained as common food : and this the Church of England adopted.

LUTHER maintained, that the elements remained still bread and wine, but that a *real presence of Christ united with them*, in virtue of the *ubiquity* of his supposed human nature, and a *real manducation of Christ's body* followed ; this was termed *consubstantiation*.

THE POPISH DOCTORS, contended for a *real transmutation* of the elements, which, under the *form* of bread and wine, *lost their nature and substance*, after consecration, and were actually changed into the very body and blood of Christ, by *transubstantiation*.

AN. 1531. ZUINGLIUS fell in battle, attending with his exhortations his countrymen, as was the duty of his office. With this his adversaries presumed to upbraid him, and insult his memory, however undeserving reproach. The triumph of the popish bigot, Sir Thomas More, speaks what spirit he was of : but his loss was more than repaired in Calvin, who soon after took the lead at Geneva, and was regarded as the patriarch of the reformed churches. His learning, piety, and zeal, attracted from all countries students to Geneva, now become a kind of seminary to the reformed churches, as Wittemberg had been to the Lutheran ; and from thence they issued forth, to spread the opinions, and to recommend the model of their admired teacher. Hence a band of union was formed through England, Holland, Germany, France, and Switzerland, by similarity of studies, and uniformity in opinion, respecting the grand theological tenets ; regarding as a matter of more indifference the system of government and discipline which each formed for themselves.

Luther had given the civil magistrate the supreme power in ecclesiastical regulations, and Zuinglius had therein concurred with him ; yet, whilst he made the clergy dependent on the civil government, he admitted a difference of rank, and appointed a superintendant over the clergy of his canton.

Calvin maintained the independence of the Church on the magistrate, as competent to form its own government and regulations, in synods and consistories, under the protecting power of the civil ruler, with perfect parity among the presbyters.

The Church of England steered a middle course.—All supremacy of legal dominion being in the King, and the two houses of parliament. Their decisions only constitute law. But the clergy in convocation, with the consent of the monarch, may form regulations binding on their own body, as the bye-laws of a corporation, though not universally obligatory. For a long while past this convocation hath ceased to meet for ecclesiastical affairs ; at least they only meet and adjourn, without proceeding to any business.

France, Holland, and Scotland, with Geneva, adopted the government which Calvin recommended. The Swiss persevered in that established by Zuinglius ; and the Churches of England and Ireland pursued with episcopacy a mixed regulation, subordinate to the parliamentary supremacy.

But the great point which distinguished this leader of the reformed churches, respected *the decrees* of God, and their consequences, on the everlasting state of men, as flowing from his own sovereign pleasure and will. Nothing that Calvin advanced spoke stronger than Lu-

ther had previously maintained on the subject of predestination and grace ; the impotence of the human will to good ; and the utter corruption of our fallen nature. But after his decease, the Lutherans in general departed from the tenets of their great reformer, to the semipelagian system of *co-operation*. Against this, the Genevian apostle, ably seconded by his colleagues, Beza, Zanchius, and others, strongly contended and supported the system, since called the Calvinistic, with such force of argument that it was universally adopted through all the reformed churches, and became their discriminating feature : and must continue so, as long as the Helvetic confession, the catechism of Heidleberg, the decisions of the synod of Dort, the assembly's catechism, and the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England continue unrepealed. For, whatever change of sentiments may have been wrought at Geneva, in France, Holland, Germany, or Great-Britain ; whilst these formularies continue the express bonds of union in the several churches, in which none can enter into holy orders, but by their solemn consent and approbation to the truths which these formulas of doctrine contain, so long whatever difference of sentiment may be entertained by individuals, ministers, or others, the majority, or minority, none can be inferred in *the Church*, which remains for ever such, as the articles of her faith declare.

The disputes occasioned by the opposition raised to these predeltinarian sentiments, form a principal part of the history of the reformed churches ; as in each of them they were attacked by men of the greatest acuteness and learning ; and, as they present a revolting aspect in the view of every unhumiliated conscience, and unenlightened mind, it was impossible, humanly speaking, but those very consequences should result, which

we are about shortly to detail ; and which are equally singular and observable ; to wit—That for a long while past the majority of teachers and people in all the reformed churches have been departing farther and farther from the free grace and predeterminarian system ; and yet the original establishment of these doctrines, in their several formularies and confessions of faith, remains exactly as they were fixed from the beginning.

Switzerland, divided between Popish and Protestant cantons, hath continued since the days of Calvin, the same formula of doctrine and discipline.

France united herself with Geneva and her venerable fathers, Farel and Beza ; who, after Calvin's decease, spread the truths he taught with equal zeal and success ; but that unhappy country, torn with civil and religious feuds, suffered severely. The party of the reformed, and the Catholics, were not very unequally balanced, though the preponderance rested with the latter. Yet the Huguenots a name given to the French Protestants, were numerous even at court, and among the principal personages of the kingdom. The dreadful massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's day, which every tongue has execrated, kindled afresh the fires of dissention, hardly extinguished ; and through seas of blood, Henry of Navarre, the heir of the throne, contended for his birth-right against his popish and inveterate enemies. The great obstruction was his profession of the reformed religion. Honor long maintained the struggle, for conscience with such a man could have presented a feeble barrier. A change of religion seated him at last peaceably on the throne. Henry the Fourth, surnamed *the Great*, was a man of intrepid valor, a consummate politician, and in his general manners esteemed as the most

amiable of men ; withal a professedly zealous Protestant ; but, at the same time, the slave of appetite, and indulging his passions in such impurity of licentiousness, as disgraced the name of Christian. It little signified, indeed, to what church he belonged. His politic apostasy procured peace for the body which he deserted, as well as the throne for himself ; and the edict of Nantz confirmed to the reformed the most ample toleration, with free admission to all places of honor and profit ; and chambers of justice, where they enjoyed an equal number of assessors of their own profession. A third part of the kingdom at least had then embraced the reformed religion. AN. 1589.

AN. 1560. Knox, the famous Scotch reformer, and pupil of Calvin, brought from Geneva the reformed sentiments and discipline, and after furious struggles established them through Scotland.

England had long been preparing, before Luther or Calvin arose, for a reform ; and when first the separation was formed from the see of Rome, was in peculiar circumstances. During the life of Henry the Eighth, a man of violence, lawless in appetite, and destitute of all religion, England, as a body, could not be properly said to have had any religious sentiments, or church establishment, when the despotic will of the monarch made what alterations he pleased, and sent to the flames, or the scaffold those who dared to question his supremacy, or to controvert his decisions. Cranmer, the friend of Calvin, and in opinion one with him, respecting doctrines, was high in the favor of this capricious and cruel monarch. By improving every offered occasion, and yielding, where he found opposition useless, though often exposed to the most imminent ruin, he endeavored to avert all the evil, and do all the good which was in his

power. But no sooner had death removed
AN. 1547. the tyrant, and placed the amiable Edward
on the throne, than the whole ecclesiastical
establishment was moddled according to the reformed
system, leaving the bishops, and the discipline of the
Church, nearly as they had been before. The abuses
of popery were all removed, or at least it was designed
they should be : and England became a capital member
of the reformed Church. The excellent Peter Martyr,
the intimate friend of Calvin, was invited over, and seat-
ed in the professor's chair at Oxford ; and both univer-
ties maintained with zealous attachment the doctrines
termed Calvinistic, and which the thirty-nine articles
confirmed, as the established profession of the kingdom.
Geneva was avowed a sister Church, united in doctrine,
though different in Government and discipline : and
herein, by an express declaration of Calvin, bound to
exercise mutual indulgence. This flourish-
AN. 1553. ing period continued till the reign of Ma-
ry ; when many eminent ministers being mar-
tyred, the rest who escaped her bloody bishops, disper-
ed and fled into the foreign Protestant churches, and
were received at Geneva with the most fraternal hospi-
tality. When divine Providence, on the
AN. 1558. demise of Mary, placed Elizabeth on the
throne, these persecuted exiles returned to
the land of their nativity, restored to their charges, and
exercising their ministry in the church, from which they
had been expelled : but, during their absence, their
habits of intimacy and acquaintance with Geneva and
her divines, as well as of the other reformed church-
es, had raised scruples in their minds respecting the law-
fulness of many rites continued in the Church of Eng-
land ; and a wish to reduce that establishment to a con-
formity with the greater simplicity of the foreign reformed

churches. The body of the dignified clergy was against the exiles : many had conformed from popery, and wished to keep as near as possible to the Church which they had renounced, in hopes of another change : but above all, the imperious Elizabeth who had inherited an abundant portion of her father's tyrannical spirit, held her supremacy with a jealous tenacity, and set her face against all innovations ; and though both her interest and inclination seemed to concur with her education, and to make her a determined Protestant, yet she had no objection to the exterior pomp of worship, and rather appeared willing to enlarge than curtail the ritual ceremonies. Nor did the strict and rigid manners of the exiles at all appear cogential to her spirit, which, with all her apparent zeal for the outward profession of the Protestant religion, seemed totally destitute of the power of it, in her conscience and her conduct. Her imperious temper ; her feminine vanity ; her duplicity and cruelty to the Queen of Scots ; her profane swearing ; and a multitude of acts utterly inconsistent with the purity and gentleness of the religion of the Son of God, might be consistent with the character of a great Queen, but utterly incompatible with that of a good Christian.

Far from conceding any thing to the wishes of those who began to obtain the name of *Puritan*, from the *purrier worship* and *manners* which they professed to seek, the Queen published the *Act of Uniformity*, and enforced it with all the rigor of her authority. The puritans exasperated by a treatment, which, after their long and eminent sufferings, they thought they so little deserved, and so little expected, obtained not from sharp and bitter invectives against their oppressors ; and their obliquity and their scrupulosity were often as extreme, as

the insolence and intolerance of their adversaries were blamable. The best, the gentlest, the most peaceable on both sides, were little heard amidst the passions of heated opponents : neither party was disposed to yield ; and the breach daily widened. The refusal to grant a liberal toleration, and the determination to suppress the murmurs of the discontented, by the strong hand of power, rendered them only more inimical to government, and united among themselves ; which otherwise they would not have been : for, whilst the most violent labored to overturn the ecclesiastical establishment, and to reduce it to their favorite Genevian model, the more moderate would have gladly accepted a few concessions, removing the most obnoxious grounds of their objection to the forms established ; of which the article of vestments, the sign of the cross in baptism, and some similar rites, made a formidable part : for, as to the *doctrines*, they were perfectly consentient, and equally tenacious of them, perhaps more so than their adversaries. Nor were they as averse to the name of bishop or his superintendence, as to the pomp, and wealth, and political engagements of the prelacy : for as yet the English bishops claimed not their office by *divine right*, but *under the constitution of their country* ; nor pleaded for more than two orders of apostolic appointment, bishops and deacons.—(See Burnet Reform. vol. 1. p. 324.)

AN. 1588. Bishop Bancroft widened the breach, by asserting in a sermon, preached at Paul's Cross, that bishops were a distinct order from priests, and that by *divine right* ; and Archbishop Whitgift supported the assertion.

This tended farther to irritate, as the archbishop and his associates refused to consider any as invested with the ministerial character, who were not episcopally or-

dained ; and demanded of those, who had been set apart in the other reformed churches, to be re-ordained before they were permitted to minister in the Church of England : as if there could be no ministers, no sacraments, no ordinances, no church, without bishops, priests, and deacons of episcopal ordination : and this as much offended the whole body of the reformed churches abroad, as it justly irritated the Puritans at home.

The cathedrals, their worship and pomp, were peculiarly obnoxious to the Puritans, as were the dignitaries that occupied the stalls in them : and as they desired to banish the pageantry of devotion, they also wished a greater purity of discipline ; and that all who were open offenders, or of dubious character, should be excluded from the communion of the faithful : but that such exclusion from the table of the Lord, should not expose them to any civil or worldly incommodity, in reputation, person, or estate.

The high commission court, and its arbitrary inquisitorial proceedings were strongly and justly objected to ; but such an engine was too congenial to the despotic temper of the monarch, not to be sure to meet her strenuous support.

Thus began those troubles in the Church, the fearful effects of which, the next generation peculiarly experienced : where each equally blameable in their turn, abused their power in persecution ; and instead of liberty of conscience, and generous toleration, smote with the sword of the civil magistrate, all that refused to conform to their several exclusive establishments.

The conflicts of the contending parties I mean not to dwell upon. I can only just notice, that among the

Puritans themselves, though united against the Church, much disunion prevailed: while some would be content with less, and others claimed more reforms, a variety of sects commenced in embryo, which a future age hatched into life. Of these I shall only notice that denomination of dissenters which now first began to appear, and afterwards becoming so dominant under the protectorate, declined at the restoration, but at present seems greatly reviving.

AN. 1581. *The Independents* trace their most distinguished origin to Robert Brown, a man of abilities, who affected to form a purer church, on the apostolic model, than had yet existed. He consented to all the Calvinistic doctrines, alike at that day admitted by churchmen and Puritans; but in ecclesiastical government, he suggested a new plan of *congregational churches*, of which antiquity had furnished no precedent, at least since the apostolic age: each separate and distinct—consisting of those only who worshipped in the same place—exempt from all jurisdiction but of themselves—electing their own pastors—and dismissing them by the vote of a majority of members—admitting and expelling from their society in the same mode. Their *pastor* was distinguished neither by garb nor superiority from the rest; except his leading the devotions, ministering the sacraments, and addressing the congregation by appointment of the people. They permitted him not to minister baptism, or the communion, except to those of his own society; yet did they not restrict the office of *teacher* to one, but admitted any member who offered and was approved by the church, to exhort and edify their brethren: withal highly intolerant, they refused all communion with every other society of Christians, formed upon a different model from their own. In many

of these points the independents have been since more enlarged and liberal. Brown, after flying his country for his opposition to the governing powers, and attempting to form churches on the independent model in the Dutch provinces, returned to England, conformed to the church established; and is said to have finished his latter days at Achurch, in Northamptonshire, in a manner disgraceful to any church. A part of one of the congregations which he quitted at Leyden, transported themselves to America, and founded at Boston the first independent society on that Continent.*

Yet, amidst these disputes and contentions, respecting the forms of religion, a great and glorious number of living evidences of pure Christianity appeared. Many of the writings which have reached us, witness the excellence of their authors: and the exemplariness of their conduct, and their zeal for their adorable Master's service, demonstrate, that the reformed churches in this land were then a praise in the earth. It is much to be lamented, that a greater spirit of meekness and mutual forbearance was not exercised by men, who, professing to unite in all the divine doctrines, and the holy influence of them, put an importance upon the ceremonies of religion, to which they seem so little intitled. The one side, too intolerant and tenacious of authority, not disposed to admit reasonable claims, or to indulge conscientious scruples; the other, stiff and unbending, dissatisfied with any concessions or alterations, which came not up to the extent of their requisitions; and charging many of the bishops as tyrannical and anti-christian, who certainly meant to be neither; and will, by all impartial posterity, be reckoned among the ex-

* Their first landing, and settlement were at Plymouth.

cellent of the earth. The great head of the church hath long since judged both parties, and I doubt not, they are together praising him, who pitieth our infirmities, and pardoneth our iniquities. Certain it is, that many of the bishops of that day were laborious pastors, and edified the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, by their examples and preaching, as they did the whole church by their writings; and it is as certain, that many of those who dared not conform to the establishment, were ministers equally pious, learned and exemplary, adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour by the purity of their lives, and greatly edified the little flocks which had been collected by their labors: and notwithstanding the weight of authority against them, they continued rising in public estimation, and encreasing the numbers of the dissatisfied. These were of two sorts, *State Puritans*, who wished to introduce a greater measure of civil liberty into the government, and were the *political chiefs*, who watched their opportunity to turn the discontents of their brethren to the accomplishment of their own designs. The others were *Church Puritans*, who desired no alterations in government, and would have acquiesced in the ecclesiastical establishment with some modifications, but wished a reduction of unnecessary ceremonies, and to separate the Church from political connections with State; so as to be less a worldly sanctuary, as to them it appeared. It was something observable, that the men among the conformists themselves, who neither objected to the forms or the government of the church, if they manifested peculiar zeal in preaching; strictness of manners; and abstained from the theatre, and what the world calls the innocent amusements of life; they also received the brand of Puritanism, a circumstance highly favorable to the non-conforming party, as impressing an idea that

with them the greatest spirituality of conduct, and the power of godliness, was to be found, since all who shewed the most of this in their conversation, bore their reproach.

The holy lives, and the triumphant deaths of many of the men of that generation, are on record. Their flourishing congregations, and the attention paid to the ministry of those most faithful laborers, shew a relish for the truths which they preached, and a desire to be followers of such as through faith and patience inherited the promises. I hear them often branded as hypocrites, and their piety interpreted as outrageous and enthusiastic; but I am not at all satisfied, that those from whom the reproaches of this sort come, are the best judges of evangelical truth, or the noblest patterns of Christian conversation. There were, do doubt, many hypocrites, and such as, under the cloak of religious appearance, had political ends in view; but this will be only a farther proof of the fact, that a life of exemplary godliness was common, and highly respected; and therefore demonstrates a general spread of *vital religion** among us, in that day.

The UNITED PROVINCES, rescued from the tyrannical dominion of Philip, as well as emancipated from the Romish yoke, by many a hard-fought battle, and persevering courage, began to breathe in established liberty, which defied the impotent malice of their enemies. The furnace of affliction always
AN. 1579. brightens the Church of God. A great and faithful host of preachers of the everlasting

* I venture to use this phraseology, however much it hath been derided by infidels and scoffers; and I do it on purpose to express my views of *true Christianity*, as a divine principle of life, implanted by the Spirit of God. (The Author's note.)

gospel arose, and the bands of religion strengthened them for every conflict. A golden God, and the spirit of commerce, with the wealth it produces, had not as yet extended its baneful influence over the men of that generation. They had started in the race vigorously ; and adopting the reformed system of doctrine, adorned it by a purity, sobriety and temperance, that was distinguishing.

A great number of the Bohemian and Moravian brethren, joined by the persecuted followers of Huss, and driven by the Catholic clergy into Poland, united with the reformed churches. They had at first connected themselves with Luther and his associates, to whom they sent their confession of faith and discipline, and were not disapproved, though in many things AN. 1522. different from the Lutheran. But when they were expelled Bohemia, retaining their own discipline, they adopted the Calvinistic doctrine. I apprehend a branch still remained in Moravia, and Bohemia, united with the Lutherans, from whom the present Moravian brethren are descended ; who, in doctrine, approach much nearer the Lutheran confession than the Helvetic, though in their church government they have retained episcopacy, and peculiarities very distinguishing. If their ancestors were as excellent as many of that denomination in the present day, we must reckon them among the living members of the real Church of the redeemed.

The Poles, from them, and other Germans, received the true evangelical religion ; and Bohemians, Lutherans, and Swiss, confederated to defend themselves ; exercising towards each other mutual indulgence, and bearing the name of *united brethren*.

Many of the German principalities, Hanau, Nassau, Isengberg, and others, towards the end of this century, joined the reformed churches ; and the progress of Calvinism in Denmark was considerable, though the dominant religion continued Lutheran.

It may not be improper to close the account of the reformed Church, with some strictures on the character of that eminent personage, who was so highly distinguished in his day, and has ministered so much matter of admiration to his friends, and obloquy to his enemies.

CALVIN was a native of Noyon, in Picardy : his mental powers were great ; his diligence indefatigable ; his erudition equal to the first of that age ; his eloquence was manly ; his style perspicuous, and admirably pure ; as a minister of the sanctuary, as a professor of divinity, his labors were immense. Yet in the zenith of his power, his income amounted only to twenty-five pounds a-year ; and he refused the increase of stipend which was offered him by the magistracy, chusing rather to give an example of disinterestedness to his successors. His morals were strictly exemplary ; his piety fervent ; his zeal against offenders in doctrine, or manners, rigid. He had much opposition to encounter, but he subdued it by persevering ardor, and dignity of conduct. His influence at Geneva was vast ; and he was looked up to by the reformed in general, as their oracle. Every where his name was mentioned with reverence. Tenacious in point of doctrine he met a host of opponents, who rejected the system of unconditional decrees. Controversy sharpened his spirit, and he is accused of abusing his power and influence in acts of oppression towards his adversaries. The sufferings of Gruet, Bolfac, Castalio, Ochinus, but particularly of the ever remembered Servetus, put to death by the Gene-

van magistrates, for his socinian and infidel opinions, have brought an odium on Calvin's name, as having instigated them to such acts of violence ; at least not having exerted the authority which he was known to possess, to prevent the shedding of blood : and if this were a just charge, let the reproach rest upon him.

However dangerous such opinions may be supposed to the peace of society, or the souls of men, many now doubt the right of any penal inflictions for them ; and much more the justice of putting any man to death on that account, however impious or atheistical he may be. But, in truth, the rights of conscience were as little understood in that day among the Protestants as among the Papists ; and obstinate heresy, or daring blasphemy, supposed to deserve the most condign punishment, and adjudged to prison, and to death.

Far from attempting to justify these severities, I esteem this as the foulest blot in Calvin's otherwise fair escutcheon ; nor do I think the spirit of the times any exculpation for violating the plainest dictates of the word of God and common sense, that " liberty of conscience and private judgment are every man's birth-right : " and where nothing immoral, or tending by some overt act to disturb the peace of society appears, there all punishment for matters of opinion must be utterly unchristian, and unjustifiable.

Calvin's advice to the English Puritans, respecting conformity, was singularly conciliatory. He wished them in all matters of indifference to submit ; and where they could not, to give as little offence as possible.—Supposing with the wisest part of the reformed Church, that " Jesus Christ having left no express directions respecting ecclesiastical government, every nation might

establish the form most agreeable to itself, provided nothing was enjoined contrary to the word of God." That he was a great man, his enemies will not deny—that he was a good man, they who knew him best bore the most unimpeachable witness: and what none dare dispute, those who were the most distinguished in every Protestant country, for learning and piety, courted his acquaintance, and gloried in his friendship; than which, perhaps, a more unequivocal proof cannot be produced of human excellence.

The reformed Church exhibited a constellation of worthies, many of whom have been mentioned, and more are omitted, whose writings demonstrate their deep erudition, and theological knowledge; and, who are still consulted for their critical skill, as well as for practical improvement. Their system was to open the word of God, as the fountain of wisdom, admitting nothing to be taught, as divine truth, but what was clearly deducible from thence; avoiding all far-fetched interpretations, and scholastic subtleties. And on this basis of the pure word of God alone, have the reformed churches been erected: and amidst the deplorable apostacy from all religion, subsist in vigour to the present day.

III. THE HETERODOX CHURCH.

A THIRD body of Protestants, who are formed into Church order and profess Christianity, I have ventured without meaning any reproach, to class under the title of HETERODOX; as they differed so essentially and fundamentally from the rest of the reformed. These rose up under several names and forms; to the chief of which I shall shortly advert, and their history.

It was hardly possible, when the spirit of reformation after years of darkness invited to the perusal of the scriptures, and to the most unlimited freedom of enquiry into their contents, that a diversity of sentiments should not arise among the learned ; from whom, and their conceit of superior intelligence, all heresies have usually commenced. Of the multitudes therefore of those, who rose up in opposition to the popish abuses, some pushed their objections even to the Bible itself ; and rejected, as we have seen, revelation, and the very being of a God. The old heresies of Arian and Pelagian origin, revived ; and various shades of degradation of Christ's divinity, brought him down from essential godhead, to the lowest state of humanity, in the system called SOCINIANISM : unless we shall admit the modern Unitarians to a lower step ; who with the *Davidists*, a sect in Transylvania, refused every address, or honor of mediation, to Jesus Christ. Indeed the gradations scarcely deserve consideration, as the difference between the true God and no God is such, as hardly to admit of any thing intermediate. This sect appears to derive its origin from Italy ; and its name from Faustus Socinus ;* and to have spread among a few individuals of considerable literature ; but not to have been moulded into form, and an establishment, till it visited Poland, where, after some vicissitudes, the city of Racow, in the palatinate of Sandomir, became the seminary and metropolitan seat of this heresy ; and the Racovian catechism their confession of AN. 1574. faith. The leading principle of the sect appears to be, that, " whatever surpasses the limits of human comprehension is to be excluded from

* Lelius Socinus, the Uncle of Faustus was properly the founder of this sect.

the Christian profession." The mystery of the Trinity—the incarnation of the Son of God—and the deity of the Spirit—are therefore, consequently, utterly renounced in their creed. Respecting the article of baptism, they admitted only adults ; and re-baptised those who joined them from other communions. They were considerably divided among themselves ; and though they made many zealous efforts from Racow, to spread their tenets into other countries, they met with very little success, being every where watched with a jealous eye, and often punished by both Lutherans and Calvinists, as well as committed to the inquisition, under the Roman pale.

It is observable that some of the most zealous disciples of Socinianism were physicians, as Servetus, whose fate is well known ; and whose turbulent spirit brought him to his untimely end, inexcusable as the instruments were who imbrued their hands in his blood.

AN. 1563. Blandrata, another physician, sent into Transylvania at the request of Prince Sigismund, labored with equal zeal and more success ; and with his associates spread their opinions, and procured a peaceable establishment, and open profession of their faith there, to this day. Though their numbers have not been great in any place, they have maintained an existence, and in the declensions of pure Christianity, have gained proselytes in countries, into which at first they found no admission ; as in England ; where an effort, though with no great success, has been made to revive the Unitarian and Socinian notions with some deviations from their original. The indifference to all religion, has permitted them peaceably to exist ; at the same time, that it hath been unfavorable to their progress ; as these opinions suit not the multitude, and the few who chuse to be free.

thinkers, and treat revelation cavalierly, rather prefer to make no profession of Christianity at all.

The peaceableness of the Socinian principles, which in their most ancient catechisms, forbade oaths, or the resistance of injury or oppression, made them much less observable than the sect of the *Anabaptists*, with which they were often classed because of their coincidence in the point of baptism, however different in other particulars. These last indeed excited the greatest disturbances, required the strong arm of power to subdue them, and brought upon themselves the heaviest censures of the reformed, whether Lutherans or Calvinists.

Amidst the agitations of those days, arose this sect; presuming to found a new Church, in which every member should be a true and real saint; and their leaders, under a sure divine impulse, and armed with miraculous powers against all opposition. Under Muntzer, Stubner Stork, and John of Leyden, a tumultuous multitude declared war against all magistracy, and proposed to erect a new *christocracy*, in which they expected the Saviour himself personally to appear, and to rule the nations by them and their followers. The first inundation was swept away as above recorded, and the leaders destroyed. But the sect subsisted, and continued to disseminate the same hopes, and to make the same pretensions. Not that all who were included in the name, were alike turbulent in their principles, or fanatic in their expectations. Many of them appear to have been persons of real piety, seduced by the hope of a purer and better state of the Christian Church; and only held in common with the rest, the necessity of adult baptism, by immersion. The different countries where they spread, concurred in exerting every means of suppressing them; and abstained not from cruelties, which disgraced the

Christian name ; and which, as hath been often proved, the constancy and intrepidity of the sufferers, braving the savageness of their persecutors, turned to the credit and advancement of their cause. The magistrate absurdly involved all who bore the name of Anabaptist in the same criminality ; however harmless the visionary hopes of many were, compared with the errors and turbulence of others. And because an *incurable heretic* in the eye of a protestant, as well as a papist, was still an object for the sword and coercion of the established government, they suffered severely ; so inadequately was true Christian liberty yet understood.

On the destruction of Munster, with its taylor king, and the dispersion of those who escaped the fury of their enemies, the fugitives persecuted in every place, were reduced very low, and saw the extinction of their sect approaching : when Menno, a Frieslander, who had been a popish priest, and, as he owns, a notorious wicked man, was, by frequenting their assembly, reclaimed ; and being a person of singular abilities, joined the society, and became their chief. His indefatigable labors from Holland to Livonia, amidst innumerable dangers, greatly increased the number of his followers. The gentleness of his spirit, the piety of his conduct, the power of his preaching ; and his unwearied zeal, gave weight to his advice. His wisdom also removed the most objectionable parts of the Anabaptist tenets, and moulded them into a consistence, far less offensive to the rest of their Christian brethren. He retained still some of the particular doctrines of the sect, respecting baptism—the millenium—the unlawfulness of war—and of oaths—and the exclusion of all magistracy from their communion—but he condemned all their past turbulence, polygamy, and pretences to in-

spiration : recommending the greatest peaceableness of conduct, even to non-resistance, and the strictest purity of morals, without which none were to be admitted, or abide in their communion. Under so prudent a leader, the society established order, and obtained respectability. Divisions among themselves indeed greatly weakened their cause ; which all Menno's prudence could not appease. A rigid sect arose affecting peculiar strictness of discipline, and hurling excommunications against their brethren on the slightest occasions. This produced a separation into the rigid and moderate Anabaptists, and endless debates of too little consequence to dwell upon.

In Holland, under that great friend of liberty. William Prince of Orange, they obtained a peaceable settlement, and liberty of conscience ; having generously assisted him with money in a great emergence. From thence they are supposed to have emigrated to England. But those who have settled with us, differ still much from the ancient and modern Mennonites ; and more among themselves : for holding as the distinguishing feature of their party, the article of baptism, nothing can be more remote from each other than the *general* baptists, who have embraced the Arminian tenets, and the *particular* Baptists, who strongly adhere to those of Calvin, and the reformed churches. And of these latter, a great difference remains betwixt those who admit mixed communion, and those who refuse it to any but their own peculiar sect. A few also observe the Jewish sabbath, as their day of worship, in preference to the Lord's day, and are termed *seventh day Baptists*.

When I have ranked the first Anabaptists under the head of heterodox, with their fanatical opinions ; I wish by no means to be understood as comprehending the

Mennonites, or modern congregations of Baptists, on any line with the Socinian and Arian heresy ; far otherwise. After Menno had purged this denomination from the most exceptionable tenets, I have no doubt, that many of his followers and himself deserve a name in the Church of the living God, and were as true and real members of Christ's body, as the excellent in the reformed and Lutheran churches. And whoever candidly weighs their doctrines and practices in the present day must allot them a place among the faithful, as a general body, notwithstanding their tenaciousness on the point of baptism. Indeed in all other things they seem very nearly united with their reformed brethren, respecting the fundamental articles of the Christian faith : are exemplary in their zeal to promote the salvation of souls by Jesus Christ ; and exhibit respectable specimens of those who walk so, as we have Christ for an example. Through the weakness of our intellect, and the infirmity of the flesh, it is not the lot of mortals to be of one mind, nor of real Christians to form a compleat system of unity of opinion. But one thing *they* desire to do, to hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace : and to be of one heart, where they are not perfectly joined in the same sentiments. And though they occupy separate communions, and assemble not in the same places, or with the same forms of worship, yet all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, will love one another out of a pure heart fervently. In a better world we shall be still more closely united, and be one fold under one Shepherd. How should this prospect and hope mortify the spirit of prejudice and bigotry in every heart, and lead us to greater enlargement and mutual forbearance !

CENTURY XVII.

CHAP. I.

PROGRESS OF THE EXTERNAL CHURCH.

AFTER ages of gloomy superstition, the reign of ignorance and primeval night, we have seen the sun of righteousness rising with healing in his wings, to dispel the darkness, and illumine the path, which alone can lead the faithful to the light of eternal day.

The struggle in Europe, between truth and error had been long and obstinate ; and, however blessed the issue, the effects of the contest were greatly to be deplored, as having produced wars, which desolated the face of many countries, and conflicts in all the lands of Christendom ; sometimes as fatal to the persecutors, as to the persecuted.

The combatants now had in a sort rested on their arms, and precluded, by the peace of Augsburg, from attempting any considerable inroads on each other's territories by violence, the Catholics and Protestants began to plan how they might extend their influence over the regions which had been lately discovered. The former especially, hoped thereby to recover some indemnity in the new Continent, for their losses in the old.

Herein, indeed the catholics possessed a great and manifest advantage, not only as united under one spiritual head, but also because the grand discoveries had

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been made by those who professed the faith of Rome, and continued under her obedience. These all equally wished with the popes themselves, to propagate their own religion, and thus confirm a surer and safer dominion over those whom they had brought under the yoke, or hoped by monkish auxiliaries more easily to subdue. Nothing could more exactly concur with the ambitious views of the papal see. A host of missionaries rushed into the battle, zealously disposed to spread the knowledge of such Christianity as they held, through all the countries into which the arms or commerce of Spain and Portugal had penetrated. We have seen the institutions of Jesuits expressly devoted to this object: nor were the other orders, roused by their zeal and emulation, behind them in the work.

To direct their efforts most effectually for spreading the popish religion, and bringing the subjected nations, and others, within her pale, was among the most important objects of the Church of Rome. With
 AN. 1622. view the pope established a congregation of Cardinals, *de propaganda fide*, whose this name expressed their office. To defray every expence, a vast endowment, successively increased, furnished the most ample means. The missionaries were educated, conveyed, and supplied with every necessary. Seminaries were established for such heathen converts as should be sent to Europe from the different nations. Books were printed in all languages for the use of missions. A provision was made for erecting schools, and affording the poor assistance, whether by medicine or under any temporal want. In short, every thing which could forward the missions was liberally supplied.
 AN. 1663. France copied the example of Rome, and formed an establishment for the same purposes.

Regiments of friars, black, white, and grey, were ready for embarkation, however distant the voyage or perilous the service.

The Jesuits claimed the first rank, as due to their zeal, learning, and devotedness to the holy see. The Dominicans, Franciscans, and other orders disputed the plan with them ; and jealous of their superiority, as is the case usually betwixt rivals for fame, they impeached the purity of their motives ; imputed their zeal to ambitious purposes ; and accused them of subjecting their converts to their own order, with a view to make merchandise of them. Into these accusations probably much truth entered, but more envy. Indeed, the religion which any of these taught, was almost, if not altogether, as far removed from the simplicity that is in Christ, as the Paganism from which the converts were drawn. From the commencement of the millions, the congregation of Cardinals has been employed in hearing and examining innumerable memorials and criminations against the Jesuits, the most grievous and disgraceful to the Christian name. I confess, after considering the accusations and the avowed principle of popery, "That every fraud and artifice is pious, that tends to promote the interests of the Romish Church," the Jesuits seem fully vindicated. Admitting this allowed principle, they acted wisely. None can refuse them the praise of indefatigable labor ; and little doubt can be entertained, that the issue of their missionary efforts would have been very different from what has happened, if they had not been so often checked in their career : their fidelity to the several states, under whose patronage they acted, rendered suspicious ; and their devotedness to the see of Rome itself questioned. Their rivals insinuated, that they meant only the glory, riches, and increase of

their own order ; and sacrificed to these every other consideration. Whether this was really the case or not, their steps appear directed with the most consummate skill, and crowned with astonishing success. They studied the characters of those with whom they had to do, and suited themselves alike to the peasant as the noble. They selected from their society, the instruments best qualified for their several spheres of action. They were physicians, astronomers, mathematicians, painters, musicians, artists, in every occupation, that could render their talents subservient to missionary purposes. Their gentle and insinuating manners gained the confidence of the natives where they resided. They made themselves agreeable as useful to the superior ranks : they condescended to instruct the meanest ; they consulted the different inclinations and habits of the several nations, and the individuals of each. In short they determined to become all things to all men, that they might obtain the great object in their view. The new world and the Asiatic regions, were the chief field of their labors. They penetrated into the uncultivated recesses of America ; civilised the savages, and won them to habits of industry. They visited the untried regions of Siam, Tonkin, and Cochinchina.

They entered the vast empire of China itself ; insinuated themselves into the confidence of that suspicious people, and numbered millions among their converts. They dared affront the dangers of the tyrannical government of Japan, and even there extended their conquests in a manner almost incredible. In India they assumed the garb and austerities of the Brahmins ; and boasted on the coasts of Malabar of a thousand converts baptised in one year by a single missionary. They could alike familiarise themselves with the magnificence

and luxury of the court of Pekin, or live on water and vegetables, like the Jögis; and whatever their adversaries may object to the looseness of their moral system, the conduct of the missionaries was unimpeachable; otherwise they had neither attracted nor preserved the veneration of their disciples—if they admitted of relaxation, it was for them, and not for themselves.

That their sufferings were great as their labors were successful, we have the most authentic evidence. The dreadful massacres in China and Japan, proved them sincere; and at least, as true Catholics as any at Rome, or elsewhere.

Respecting the two great points laid to their charge, of endeavoring to reconcile the Christian God, and the Christian doctrine to the prejudices of the disciples of Confucius, much may be said in their vindication.

1. With regard to the name of *God*. The use of the word *Tien*, which communicated the idea of Deity to a Chinese, might surely be adopted without offence; and if explained, be equally proper as any other term of the Hebrew or Greek language.

2. With regard to the *rites*, and offerings paid to their departed ancestors, something more objectionable may be found. To us who are no Papists it must appear equally indifferent, whether the respect be paid to Confucius, or a great grandfather, or to St. Januarius, or to St. Crispin. And if these rites were only respectful memorials, and no idolatrous worship meant, or offered, perhaps as much or more might be pleaded for them, than for any European saints, many of whom are the creatures of imagination, and never had an existence.

I wonder not that those who had born the burden and heat of the day, should object to have priests of other orders sent from France and Italy to preside over, and direct the missions which their labors had established, and count themselves insulted by such interference; and more than this, from the purest motive, they might justly apprehend, that the work itself would suffer by such intrusion.

But, I may not enter farther into these injudicious quarrels; suffice it only to observe, that their effects were fatal to the missionary work. The disputes among the missionaries affected their converts, and every where produced contentions. The jealousy of the governments was roused. A dreadful persecution arose in Japan. The teachers, as well as the disciples, fell victims to the fury and suspicion of that savage people; and the name of Christian there is no more had in remembrance, but to abhor it. AN. 1615.

In China, a flourishing æra gave brighter hopes of perpetuity, but they too were blasted. The same effects produced the same calamities; and, though the present century left the Jesuits possessed of a noble church at Peking, within the imperial precincts, and their missionaries spread through all that country, and the Mongal Tartary, the next saw them utterly expelled the empire, with great carnage, and sunk never to rise up again.

This jealousy of the Jesuits, and the final prevalence of their enemies, leading at last to the suppression of their order in the next century, has proved eventually the most fatal blow to the authority of Rome, and led almost to the extinction of all missionary labors among the Papists; an event which every Protestant will rather consider as auspicious than afflictive.

In Africa, where the Portuguese power prevailed, the Capuchins were chiefly employed, less artful and able indeed than the disciples of Loyola, but equally zealous. They relate the wonders wrought by their ministry at Benin, Soffala, and the western and southern coasts of Africa : but those who have seen these negro Christians, the Catholics themselves being judges, will with difficulty admit them to a place in the Church of Christ. Though they have been baptised, and learned to make the sign of the cross ; in all the essentials of Christianity, whether of doctrine or practice, they differ little from their countrymen. It is among the awful scenes, viewed with anguish by every real Christian, that so immense a region of the globe should be left to this day sunk in Pagan and Mahomedan darkness, and lying in the shadow of death, and no effort made to pluck the brands from the burning.

Not much more can be said for all the Catholic conversions made from Mexico to the Straits of Magellan. There Spaniards and Portuguese are alike buried in ignorance, superstition, and profligacy, even below their bigotted countrymen in Europe. With such examples and such instructors, the state of the poor natives may well be imagined : immersed in their ancient superstitions, they have added all the ceremonies and follies of their new religion, to the absurdities of the old.

Yet let it be remembered, that however Jesuits or Capuchins may be despised or condemned by Protestants, their conduct is to us highly reproachful. That we who vaunt a purer Christianity, and have so many nobler motives to animate our zeal, have been hitherto so backward in the work of heathen missions, so indifferent about enlarging the borders of Immanuel's kingdom, and so cold in our love towards the souls purchased by

his most precious blood, must be confessed our guilt and shame, and can neither be too deeply lamented, or too soon amended.

Among the Protestants it must be owned, the efforts to spread the gospel in the heathen world were few and feeble. A zealous Lutheran, Ernest, Baron of Wells, felt for the honor of his profession, and for the glory of the Lord, and sought to form a society for a Protestant mission ; but a variety of impediments disappointed his purposes, and no effectual benefit resulted from the attempt.

The two great nations of English and Dutch were too much engrossed with their commercial concerns to take religion into their view, and utterly neglected this great object. Such a scheme, indeed, was formed under Charles I. and a society appointed under the sanction of parliament for this purpose : but the confusions which followed, prevented any considerable efforts being made during the civil wars. And zealous as Cromwell professed himself for Christianity, he was too much taken up in securing his precarious dominion at home, to extend his concern to the heathen abroad. At the restoration of Charles the second, the society was re established, but the temper of that reign was little missionary—the project languished in luke-warmness. All that can be called missionary labor at that time, must be ascribed to the Puritans and non-conformists, who fled to America to escape the persecutions of government at home. Some of these men of God distinguished their zeal in labors among the poor Indians, which were crowned with tokens of divine favor. The names of Brainerd, Mayhew, AN. 1677. and Shephard, deserve to be had in remembrance : and, above all, the excellent Elliot,

called the Apostle of the Indians, a title merited by his indefatigable labors, and signal success among them ; and more especially by his translation of the Scriptures into their language, and thus enabling them to read and understand the oracles of God. These attempts in America roused the attention of many at home ; and another society, noble in its institution, was formed for *promoting Christian knowledge*. I wish I could report the mighty effects, and the zealous labors of the missionaries sent forth under their auspices. Some good, however, has been done in India, and elsewhere, and particularly in the immense number of bibles and religious tracts, which have been dispersed through all parts of the British dominions ; and never can the word of God be perused without being the savor of life unto life, or of death unto death.

I would mention the efforts of the Dutch, if I could trace the brightness of the gospel glory rising under their patronage. The independents from Leyden, indeed, emigrated to the Dutch colony in North America, and were among the first harbingers of gospel day ; and in all their settlements the reformed religion was set up ; though I find no record of considerable success in the conversion of the heathen. In Ceylon, indeed, and on the coast of Malabar, some traces of missionary labors remain. I may not conceal that in Japan, it is said, they hold the only spot which Europeans are permitted to enter, and that purchased for commercial purposes, by denying that they are Christians, and trampling on the cross : but I shall not, for the honor of the Batavian nation, easily adopt so infamous a report. It is to be lamented, that vast as their commerce, and extensive as their foreign settlements have been, no vigorous missionary efforts have yet been made, to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the countries which Providence

placed under their yoke, or brought into connection with them : but my business is to record what hath been done, rather than to blame what hath been neglected.

The amazing progress in all scientific attainments, peculiarly marks this age : never perhaps before was such a constellation of sages seen upon this stage of earth, who carried philosophy to its highest pitch. From the great Bacon, Lord Verulam, who led the way at the commencement of this æra, to the greater Sir Isaac Newton, supposed justly to be the first of human beings for intellect, discoveries, and extent of knowledge. England claims, and justly, the first place in the temple of literary fame. But other nations boast also their productions : Italy her Galileo, France her Gassendi and Descartes, Germany her Leibnitz, and Denmark her Tycho Brahe, with a thousand other names of eminence, who eclipsed all those who had preceded them in mathematics, astronomy, and natural philosophy ; and, indeed, in most other branches of knowledge, physic, chymistry, history, physiology, and every kind of literature, sacred or profane. In every nation the language became more polished, and the writers as elegant in their expressions, as deep in their researches. But these I must pass hastily over, as the more immediate subject of the Church of Christ will furnish abundant matter.

Yet it must not be forgotten, that amidst this vast accession to the stock of human knowledge, many reputed geniuses arose, whose fame (or shall I rather say infamy) was built upon the most daring attacks on revelation, or the most insidious attempts to undermine it. To philosophize above what is written, and for vain man to affect to be wiser than God, is too correspondent with his fallen nature, ready to abuse the noblest faculties to the most perverse purposes. Of these, whilst France

furnished her Vanini, and Holland the Jew Spinoza, England exhibited, with a general profligacy of manners, under Charles II. some of the most impious writers and the most infidel ; who took abundant pains to disseminate their deistical and atheistical tenets, and to embolden in his wickedness, the fool who had said (or at least hoped) in his heart, that there is no God. Such were Hobbes, Toland, and the Lords Herbert, Rochester, and Shafsbury, who endeavored, partly by reasoning, partly by ridicule, to overturn the faith of the unstable professor, or to harden the hearts of the profligate. Many, indeed, instantly arose to lift up the shield against the fiery darts of the wicked : and that great and able Robert Boyle, who is said to have always read the Scripture on his knees, zealous for divine truth, as eminent in philosophical discoveries, instituted a constant annual course of lectures, in defence of that religion, which these sceptical philosophers endeavored to supplant and destroy. Let it be however particularly noted, that the great luminaries of the age, were the strenuous defenders of divine revelation. Newton, Locke, Boyle, Maclaurin, and others, alike distinguished for science, gloried in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Not that the faith of the gospel stands in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

The general state of the Church will be seen, as we pass in review the several members of which it was composed ; the Papists, the Greeks, and the Protestants : the latter of which will more especially engage our attention, as in the others little else will be found than darkness, and the shadow of death.

CHAP. II.

ON THE CHURCH OF ROME.

THE indignant pontiffs beheld the loss of their flocks, and the defalcation of their revenues ; and deep in their hearts meditated the means of their recovery, and of vengeance on their enemies. The peace of Augsburg had bound up the arm of violence from persecution, and every where proclaimed peace and tolerance among the contending princes. But peace was torment to the Romish prelates ; and tolerance, of all imaginable evils, the most intolerable, and treason against the majesty of those anathemas, which they had hurled against all heretics. The first object therefore of Rome, and of those who filled the papal chair, was to break this bond of union ; to rouse the Catholic princes to fresh acts of oppression in their own dominions, and to renewed attempts, to bring back to the house of their prison, those who had emancipated themselves from the yoke of bondage.

This was the uniform pursuit and spirit of all the successive pontiffs ; and they employed the most powerful engines of craft and cruelty to effect their purposes. The history of one will be nearly the history of all ; though some were men of a more learned cast ; others more daringly flagitious and profligate in their manners ; and here and there a gentle spirit, covered with an honest blush, that confessed guilt ; and heaved a suppressed sigh for reformation, which the state of popery was too inveterately rooted in evil to admit. I shall not

therefore particularize, but pursue the steps which marked the designs of the pontifical chair, leaving those who have done justice to them severally, to brand with infamy the impurities, and open profligacy of Innocent the Tenth, the most criminal of men ; and to adorn the memory of the ingenuous Odeschalchi, Innocent XI. who sought in vain to cleanse the Augean stable.

As the object was to recover their lost power, wealth and dominion, the means they possessed unfortunately were but too well suited to the end. The House of Austria with the other Catholic princes, the devoted partisans of the holy see, were especially courted. To these they looked for an arm of flesh and persecution ; and endeavored to rouse them to recover their past influence, by breaking the peace of Augsbourg, and bruising under the rod of oppression those, whom they had bound themselves to protect and tolerate.

Another, and yet more powerful engine, was found in the wily, insinuating, restless, and indefatigable order of Jesuits ; the firmest supporters of the holy see, and its most zealous, as well as able satellites. These were dispersed through all lands, and seized every opportunity to pervert the ignorant, or oppress the feeble. In the courts of princes, whose confessors they chiefly were, the laxity of their moral system recommended their prescriptions for quieting guilty consciences ; and one commutation was always sure to be suggested, as covering a multitude of sins ; and this as easy to perform, as flattering to human pride and superstition. Zeal for the conversion of heretics, and the employment of any means to effect it, however savage or contrary to the most solemn engagements, cancelled all crimes.

The pens of these artful and perfidious casuists were first employed to prove the nullity of the peace of Augs-

burg, and to charge upon the Protestants, various pretended infractions; in order to justify the attack meditated against them.

The House of Austria gained by the popes, and these jesuitical directors of their consciences, began with the violation of the treaty, in their own hereditary dominions. They endeavored to prevail upon the Protestants to return to the Romish pale, by caresses, promises, the wiles of controversy, and the ingenuity of fraud; in all which, these new apostles were employed with much success. To bend the stubborn and to subdue the daring, innumerable acts of oppression were exercised: and where the law was suborned to colloque with power, redress was sought in vain. The Protestants had no choice, but to submit, or fly their country.

Bohemia next experienced the arm of popish tyranny. Despair drove the Bohemians to resistance, and to wreak on their persecutors vengeance for the wrongs they had received. And here humanity bleeds, and Christianity groans, over the miseries inseparable
AN. 1619. from civil war. On the death of the Empe-

ror Mathias, the Bohemians resolved to chuse a king of their own faith, and to preserve their civil and religious liberties against the all grasping arm of Austria. For this purpose they offered their crown to the illustrious elector palatine, a Protestant, and son-in-law to the King of England; hoping to strengthen themselves greatly by such an election. In an unfortunate hour Frederic accepted the crown, and prepared to defend himself, and his new subjects, against the claims and arms of Ferdinand of Austria. The issue of the conflict was the most afflictive. Frederic not only lost his crown and kingdom, but his own electorate. The imperial arms triumphed: and what rendered this

more grievous, it was in a great measure owing to the baseness of John, elector of Saxony, who helped on the destruction of Frederic and his brethren : whether moved by envy at his elevation, or by prejudice against him as a Calvinist. The ruin of the poor Protestants followed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate ; and they groaned under every oppression that abused power could inflict, and religious bigotry suggest : meanwhile our wretched and pusillanimous James I. looked on, nor moved a finger to support his worthy son, or the sinking cause of the reformed religion.

Tilly, the imperial general, now reigned without opponent, and Rome began again to number Germany among the countries of her obedience. The Protestants, unable to make head against their conquerors, maintained a precarious tenure in their own dominions ; and every day proclaimed the approaching despotic power of the Emperor, and the subjugation of the Lutherans, and of all who had deserted the popish pale. Rome exulted in her prospects, and the Jesuits redoubled their efforts in the conquered countries, to seduce the vanquished, to make their peace with the conquerors, by a change of their religion.

The emperor, boundless in his ambition, as enslaved to popery, now cast off the mask ; and in direct breach of the *peace of Augsbург*, instigated by the Jesuitical emissaries of Rome, issued an edict for the AN. 1629. restoration of all that had been taken from the Church, in virtue of the former treaty. Whatever priests and monks chose to claim, the imperial soldiers were at hand to seize ; and resistance was vain, where tyranny perverted the law against the Protestant possessor. The cries of the oppressed were loud. The wise and considerate of the papists themselves sup-

ported the complaints which reached the imperial throne, and remonstrated, that the inevitable consequence would be to rouse the Bohemians by despair to resistance, and to leave the country ravaged, ruined, and destitute of inhabitants. But the savage bigot Ferdinand replied, *malum est regnum vastatum, quam damnatum.*—"I had rather see the kingdom a desert, than damned." Terror and dismay spread over the remaining princes. The Protestant cause was reduced to the lowest ebb; its final overthrow in the empire seemed inevitable and approaching. But God in wrath remembered mercy; and though he thus punished their declensions, he would not wholly give them over for a prey to the teeth of their enemies.

AN. 1630. The magnanimous King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, heard the groans of his brethren with anguish. He saw the courage of the few remaining Lutheran princes quelled by fear; or their arm palsied by mean attention to their own interest, and base hope of profiting by the spoils of others; though like the companions of Ulysses, Saxony the chief could only expect to be last devoured. He resolved to rescue them from oppression or perish in the attempt. The court of France, jealous of the Emperor's overgrown power, instigated Gustavus to the enterprize, and promised him assistance. He knew he should find also friends among the timid, when they dared to declare themselves, and were sure that help was at hand. He boldly therefore drew the sword, and with a small but chosen army, crossed the sea, and landed in Germany to maintain the liberty of his brethren, and check the encroachments of Austria and Rome. The issue is well known—Victory crowned the hero. The insolent pride of Ferdinand was humbled; his generals defeated. And though the

King of Sweden fell at Lutzen,* at the head of his chosen band, on the bosom of victory, his death arrested not the vigor of the Swedes. The generals who succeeded Gustavus, maintained their superiority; till worn out with a war of thirty years of misery, all parties became disposed to heal the wounds which bled throughout this unhappy country, by the peace of Westphalia. In vain the Pope and the Jesuits endeavored to put every obstacle in the way of its conclusion. Necessity obliged both parties to compromise their differences. The Emperor indeed refused to grant their former liberty to the Protestants in Austria and Bohemia, or to restore the Palatinate; yet all the other claims of the Protestants were solemnly admitted and guaranteed. The restitution edict was revoked; and the Protestant and reformed interest settled on a basis not easily to be shaken.

* The intrepid and successful efforts of this brave defender of the Protestant interest, at a period in which it was menaced with an utter extinction, seem to demand that he should be remembered with particular respect. The Reader will be pleased to see the following short sketch of his character taken from Russel's modern Europe. "No Prince, ancient or modern seems to have possessed in so eminent a degree as GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, the united qualities of the hero, the statesman and the commander; that intuitive genius which conceives, that wisdom which plans, and that happy combination of courage and conduct which gives success to an enterprise. Nor was the military progress of any leader ever equally rapid, under circumstances equally difficult, with an inferior force, against warlike nations, and disciplined troops, commanded by able and experienced generals. His greatest fault as a king and commander was an excess of valor. He usually appeared in front of the battle, mounted on a horse of a particular color, which with his large and majestic stature, surpassing that of every other Swede, made him known both to friends and foes. But Gustavus had other qualities besides those of a military and political kind. He was a pious Christian, a warm friend, a tender husband, a dutiful son, and affectionate father."

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The dragon gnashed with vexation at seeing his prey thus escape ; and set himself to provide new means, and to plot new wiles, for the seduction of those, whom he found himself unable to subdue. Nor were these without considerable effect. As open violence was restrained, the Jesuits and crafty prelates endeavored under pretence of reconciling, to soften down the grosser features of popery, and to give them a more inoffensive aspect. They professed a willingness to grant almost any indulgences to the scrupulous, only that they should return to the bosom of the Romish Church, and heal the schism ; for this end conferences were held, disputations on the points of controversy managed with greater mildness and dexterity ; every winning artifice was employed, and every tempting offer made, which could either surprise the conscience of the doubtful and ill-informed, or tempt the worldly-minded.

But these arts, through the watchfulness of the Protestants, were in a measure disappointed. The Germans chose to preserve their own liberty and religious profession. Yet a Christina, Queen of Sweden, was perverted, quitted her country and died at Rome : a woman of no semblance of religion. A Marquis of Brandenburg : a Count Palatine ; a Duke of Brunswick ; and a King of Poland, who procured a crown by his apostacy ; these, with several men of learning and name, also joined the popish communion. Indeed the zeal for making converts among the Romanists, met with little of equal activity among the Protestants. The fire of the reformation was damped ; a spirit of formality and security grew upon them ; and the number of those whose hearts were delivered from the dominion of the leading errors of popery was not so great, as the general profession seemed to signify. An una-

waked conscience, and the bias to lean on our own wisdom and doings for salvation, left many, of the wise and learned also, an easy prey to seduction. A richer spouse also tempted them; for all the great preferments were in the apostate Church. The hopes of Rome thus continued to be supported, and their secret practices in all nations attended with considerable success. Where they could influence the ruling powers, the subjects found no agreements or treaties binding. Hence in Poland the Protestants, under a variety of pretexts, were robbed and plundered, ejected from their churches, deprived of their schools, and cruelly punished, in order to engage them to renounce their faith and profession, in contradiction to all justice, and with-

out hope of redress. The same scene was acted in Hungary, under the hereditary bigotry of the House of Austria. The dukes of Savoy and Piedmont were instigated to hunt out the poor remains of the Waldenses from the fastnesses of the mountains, where they had sought a hiding place, and with all the animosity of inquisitorial cruelty, to waste by fire and sword the feeble, but patient and unresisting remains of this faithful people. AN. 1632—1685.

In Spain, as the number of Moriscoes was great, and their attachment to Mahomed inveterate, the enmity of the clergy, and the intolerance of bigotry compelled them to quit their country, or their religion. Millions of the Moors, faithful to their prophet, sacrificed all their substance, relatives and native land, and were transported into Africa: carrying their diligence and arts to enrich the soil of Fez, and Morocco; and leaving a desert behind them yet unpeopled. But the Church gained, whatever might be the losses of the

State ; and procured acquisitions in the evacuated kingdoms, which well repaid the zeal of the inquisitors.

In France a constant infringement of the Protestant liberties, reduced the numbers, and awakened the complainings of the oppressed. Every art was used to stimulate the ruling powers to persecution ; and every wile of cunning to surprise the consciences of the monarchs, surrounded by jesuits, confessors, priests and bishops, all in league to bring back the Huguenots to the house of their prison. After being long harrassed by persecution, the revocation of the edict of Nantz, compelled many hundreds of thousands of
 AN. 1684. French Protestants to seek refuge in foreign lands. Ah ! the day of recompence is come. God is visiting upon the children the iniquity of their fathers, and giving them blood to drink, for the innocent Protestant blood poured out on every side.

Nor were the artifices of popery confined to the nations under her own obedience. England was always an enviable object ; so long a sief of Rome, and patiently plundered, now cut off root and branch from all connexion or communion with the holy see. No faith was to be kept with such heretics ; and killing them esteemed no murder, but meritorious. Such were the maxims of popery ; such Garnet, the Jesuit superior in England taught ; and surprised the conscientious papist, Sir Everard Digby, and others, into a plot, the most horrible in its nature, and which threatened to be the
 AN. 1605. most dreadful in its effects ; no less than to blow up the king and both houses of parliament with gun powder ; and in the confusion of the nation, which must ensue, to set up the Roman Catholic religion. The blood runs cold when we review this scene of deliberate and atrocious wickedness, sanctioned by

Rome, and sure to merit the highest degree of glory in that anti-christian church, Just at the moment of its execution a gracious Providence discovered the infernal design, and exposed the diabolical conspirators, to the righteous laws of their country.

Disappointed, but not discouraged, the pontiffs and Jesuits pursued their object with more caution, and deeper laid schemes ; and sometimes with a prospect of success, that filled the ambitious prelate with premature exultation ; though mercifully ending in disappointment. What could not be effected under JAMES I. was attempted under his successor CHARLES AN. 1625. I. He had taken a bigoted papist for his Queen ; and with her a legion of Jesuits followed. He had promoted the violent Laud, half a papist, to the see of Canterbury, who seconded all his tyrannical designs. Mosheim indeed is utterly mistaken in asserting, that they caused "the Church of England to be new modelled, and publicly renounced the Calvinistic opinions ;" for the articles, liturgy and homilies continued in full force as ever : yet that they wished and attempted it is too true. Laud was a bitter Arminian, strongly suspected of leaning to popery, and constantly endeavoring to enlarge the ritual, and bring it to a greater conformity with Rome ; whilst his encouragement, seconded by the royal patronage, of all who opposed the established doctrines ; and his cruelty and oppression of those who held them, whom he charged with Puritanism, because they zealously counteracted his designs, kept the best men out of the Church, or silenced those who were in it ; and encouraged the apostates to greater diligence by the assured prospect of preferment.—Forbes, one of them, who well knew the objects then pursued, has given every reason to conclude, that both

Charles I. and his archbishop, would have been well content to come to terms, and be reconciled with Rome. This fatal event was prevented, by one little less to be deplored, the civil wars which broke out, and brought these unhappy innovators to that fearful end, which many, who most abhorred their popish and tyrannical designs, most deeply condemned. When once the torch of discord had lighted up the flames of war, the politic CROMWELL and his associates led on the conflagration; and the head, which wore the crown, fell the victim to his own bigotry and duplicity, and the ill-directed councils of Laud and his popish advisers.

Thus for a while the wicked, but exalted protector, waved the bloody sword, not only over his own land, but made the monarchs of Christendom tremble, court his friendship, and suspend their persecutions against the Protestants. Even the tiara itself was obliged to bow down; which he sometimes threatened to pluck from the head of the unworthy wearer; and his menaces were known to be no *bruta fulmina*; but terribly realized against his enemies. Whatever judgment may be formed of his character by others, the reflecting Christian will probably think, as I do, that tyrannical as Cromwell was, we are as much indebted, under a gracious overruling Providence, to this man for the preservation, as to the bloody Henry the Eighth, for the introduction of the Protestant religion amongst us. The good hand of our God over us for good is not the less to be acknowledged, because the instruments employed meant not so, but acted under the impulse of their own pride, ambition, and selfishness.

AN. 1660. The restoration of CHARLES the second once more revived the most sanguine hopes of Rome. He was a man of the most profligate character

and corrupted principles; and as popery to such a one was the most convenient religion, he had, during his exile, embraced it, and become the pupil of the Jesuits. But as the utmost secrecy was needful, in order to procure his return, he made the most specious and solemn professions of zeal for the Protestant faith and the Church of England: and was obliged to veil his designs at first, under the cloak of the profoundest hypocrisy. When he had by this means recovered the throne of his ancestors, the love of ease, and the love of pleasure, palsied his secret desires for the restoration of the religion he had embraced; and which only could be established in a nation who abhorred it, by a contention that might have again sent him into the banishment from which their voice had recalled him. Not that his purpose was altered, or his plans laid aside. His treaty with the King of France, through the secret negociation of the Lord Arundel AN. 1676. of Wardour, a zealous papist, had the restoration of popery for its grand object. And though he was withheld, by political circumstances, from introducing the promised supplies of men, he received the unkingly subsidy of two hundred thousand pounds yearly, to betray his country to its enemies; and *wept*, says Mr. Hume, *for joy* during an interview with his sister, the Dutches of Orleans, at the hope of quickly realizing the project of bringing back his kingdom within the Romish pale of obedience. But his indolence, his cowardice, and the pursuit of his scandalous amours, occupied his time and thoughts, and diverted him from venturing upon any steps of danger and difficulty. Death surprised him in the midst of his pleasures, and the profession of Protestantism, with his bishops around him. A popish priest was hastily sent for up the back stairs; and the rest all excluded, whilst he made his last

peace with Rome, and received the delusive viaticum. Thus died as he lived, that wicked, gentlemanlike, lewd, deceitful, popish hypocrite, Charles the second.

AN. 1685. The church of Rome had a more faithful and zealous son in his successor JAMES II. Open in his profession, and more violent, even than his Jesuit confessors themselves, he no sooner succeeded to the throne, than he unveiled, with unjesuitical imprudence, his intentions ; and thus defeated his own designs. Too sincere to dare to be a hypocrite, and too confident of his own power to carry his purposes into execution, he wantonly trampled on the laws of the land ; affronted the Church, by all the trumpery of the mass restored in his chapel ; and the nation, by acts of despotism it was little disposed to endure. His craftier associates would have checked the rapidity of his movements, and the pontiff himself wished to rein in the impetuous monarch ; but the merit, and the glory, after which he aspired, of saving the nation, over which he presided, from hell and heresy, drove him on furiously to his own destruction. The generous WILLIAM OF HOLLAND, who had married his daughter, the next Protestant heiress to the throne, obeyed the call of the people, and hastened to their deliverance. James, deceived by courtier bows and professions, flattered himself with the fidelity

AN. 1688. of his army and navy ; but, no sooner was the Protestant deliverer landed, than every man, even his dearest friends and his own daughter, deserted the bigot King, and left him as destitute of all help, as before he had appeared despotic and servilely obeyed. Thus once more the prey was taken from the mighty ; and, in the critical moment, when the waster was ready to destroy, a gracious interposition of Providence preserved the purity of religion, and the liberties of the land. Rome, gnashed with disappointed rage and

malice, sought to arm her avengers to restore the abdicated monarch ; and allured with the hope of ambitious conquests, the rival governments of France and Spain, to second her own deep laid schemes of subjection, but in vain. William, firm in the affections of his people, lifted up the banner of victory ; and in Ireland and England, humbled all his enemies, and laid the foundations of a constitution, which, with Father Paul, every good Englishman prays, *esto perpetua*.

The arms of Rome were now again reduced to subterfuge, wile, and cunning. The Jesuits unabashed, and rising, Antæus like, from their defeats, marshalled anew their forces. In France there arose a host of Polemics, who were called *Methodists*, from the artful methods which they took to confound, seduce, and pervert the Protestants from their religious principles. Veron, the Jesuit, and others, with the eminent Cardinal Richelieu at their head, endeavored to establish the authority and unity of the Church, as a divine constitution, where the danger of schism, and the prescription of antiquity formed the plausible arguments of sophistry. The contempt into which Popery is now sunk, and the extinction of its most crafty supporters, makes it superfluous to reply to arguments long since confuted, and follies now become obsolete ; and of which the remaining satellites of Rome are themselves ashamed. But in that day, much mischief arose from them ; and between the seductions produced by interest, fear, ignorance, or surprise, many departed from the profession of faith, and reconciled themselves to the false Church. Yet, on the whole, the progress of knowledge weakened the pillars of superstition, and in every state the increase of infidelity was still more evident than of popery : and the mines were prepared of that philosophical impiety,

which our days have seen bursting into explosion, and overturning all the strong holds of Catholicism.

The promising appearances also of the spread of Romanism in many foreign lands, at the beginning of the century declined towards the end of it, and all their laurels of conversion were blasted in Asia and Africa. Partly by the intrigues discovered in Japan, which awakened that ferocious government against the Jesuits ; partly by the insolence with which they carried on their pretensions, as in Abyssinia, and which ended in their expulsion : by these calamities, whether true Christianity gained or lost, is a very disputable matter.

A quarrel with the Venetians had nearly separated that country from the Romish Jurisdiction. The mediation of Henry IV. King of France, prevented a fatal rupture ; but the bands of allegiance were so loosened, and the peace restored on such terms, as securing the pontiff's honor, left him only nominal power in religious matters ; whilst the state maintained her national authority and independence. The famous Father Paul, the candid author of the council of Trent, gained himself, in this controversy, immortal honor, by defending the liberties of his country against the usurpations of Rome : and, as Cardinal Norri owns, ever since the papal bulls pass with difficulty the Po into the Venetian territories.

AN. 1607.

AN. 1641. Portugal threatened a still greater defection, but restrained by the chains of prejudice, they dared not as hardily reject the servitude of Rome, as they had boldly recovered their country from the usurpation of Spain. During all the long years which this conflict continued between the rival na-

AN. 1640.

tions, the see of Rome, overawed by the Spanish terrors, refused to grant any bull for the consecration of Portuguese bishops, and left that kingdom deprived of such spiritual succours as her pontiffs could afford. Yet, the hero who defended his independence with success against the Spanish monarch, dared not break with the Roman prelate. Inquisitorial power, and national prejudices, compelled him to temporize, till the peace with Spain permitted the Pope to issue the necessary dispensations: and thus has Portugal continued the most abject vassal of the Romish see to this day. AN. 1666.

The sturdy opposition of the French bishops to the papal encroachments on their privileges and immunities, fortified by the jealous pride of her mighty monarch against all foreign claims, had, from the beginning, preserved the Gallican church, from the servile subjection to which the other Catholic kingdoms had been reduced. This was a perpetual subject of contention. The faithful legions of Jesuits maintained the legitimacy of every papal claim. The parliament of Paris and the native ecclesiastics, defended their liberties, and excited often the papal indignation: but the popes withheld wisely their anathemas, which had lost so much of their terrors, and confined themselves to remonstrances. Indeed, humiliating instances appear of pontifical imbecility, and gallic monarchical power. The AN. 1564. punishment for an insult committed on a French ambassador, was rigorous and truly AN. 1678. mortifying to papal pride; but the disputes about the rights of presenting to benefices, during the vacancy of the Gallican bishopricks shewed that the *spiritual* claims of the Pope would be as little respected as his *temporal* dignity. Bulls upon bulls on

one side, and severe edicts on the other, against those who dared to pay them the least respect or obedience, threatened a breach not easily repaired. The Gallican bishops supported their monarch, and in a solemn assembly decreed, that all the churches of France were subject to the King's *regale*, or right of dominion, during the vacancy of every see : but they added decisions still more mortifying and derogatory to papal authority.

AN. 1682.

1. Excluding Rome from all interference in the temporal concerns of sovereigns, and restraining her authority to spirituals only.

2. Confirming the decrees of the council of Constance, subjecting the Pope, as well as all others, to a general council.

3. Maintaining all ancient usages and immunities of the Gallican church inviolable.

4. Denying the infallibility of the papal decisions, unless sanctioned by a general council : these the clergy and universities throughout the kingdom adopted. Nor could the terrors of excommunication, or the inflexibility of the pontiff, alter their determinations ; and though some soothing letters were written to appease his wrath, these decisions continued the rule of the Gallican Church.

AN. 1687. A claim much more unreasonable, of a *right of asylum for criminals*, to a great extent at Rome, under the French Ambassador's protection, spoke the proud haughtiness of the prince, and the degraded dominion of the prelate, even in his own capital. For nothing could be more unjust, or tend more grievously to the interruption of the peace and good government

of the city, than such impunity. The King of France would be obeyed ; and he only yielded as a favor, what he claimed as a right. But in the matter of the *regale*, the King carried his point, saving the honor of the holy see, by some slight modifications. The struggle, however, between the rivals for power, ceased not ; each, though more covertly, carried on their schemes of offence and defence. Sometimes jesuitical influence won the monarchs to side with the holy see ; but they jealously watched against every thing which might diminish their own authority, though they now and then sacrificed their ecclesiastics, and their immunities. Indeed the boasted liberties of the Gallican Church were confined to these. Pope, king, bishops, parliaments, and universities, equally set themselves against every thing that deserves the name of liberty in the Church, and always beat down every effort of this sort, with a rod of iron. At last the triumphs of liberty are heard, and that sacred name abused, to cover every act of cruelty and licentiousness. Church and State have sunk in the promiscuous ruin. That *neither*, such as they were before, may ever spring from the ashes of the conflagration, is the devout wish of every true friend to religion and freedom.

Attempts were made, and with some success, to reform the monastic orders, become woefully corrupt. But it is now hardly a subject worth consideration, however important at that day. The Benedictines bore the palm ; and the separation of monks into orders, reformed and unreformed, speaks pretty strongly the state of these societies. The time is past—they will probably soon be consigned to oblivion, and their names only preserved to demonstrate more strikingly the folly of mankind. The most rigid of *La Trappe* are said to have owed their

establishment to a singular incident. Their
 AN. 1664. founder, De Rance, was enamoured of a lady, with whom he had lived in a state very unclerical. After a short absence, returning, he passed to her chamber by a back door, which he had commonly used. There a dreadful scene presented itself : the dear object of his affections had fallen the victim of the small-pox ; and, in all the disfigurement of that horrible disease, was laid out a corpse ; the room illuminated, and hung with black. He stood motionless, gazing in stupid horror on the face he had adored ; and hasting to the most gloomy and desolate region of France, buried himself in the monastery, which long attracted so much attention and respect for its austerities : but now happily evacuated, can hardly be employed to a worse purpose than it was before.

Towering supereminent above the rest, the Jesuits rose to the summit of power and influence ; envied, feared, and hated by all their monkish brethren ; and in a system of consummate policy and perseverance, defeating all the attacks made on them ; and looking down upon their impotent, though envenomed assailants. Among these, the Jansenists were the foremost, and most formidable, and brought upon themselves in consequence, the wrath of the partial pontiffs, whose tiara itself was compelled to bend to the majesty of Jesuitical influence. Had any man dared suggest their fall and extinction at that day, with what contempt would his predictions have been treated ?

The state of learning in popish countries was certainly highly improved ; and though the famous Galileo was cast into prison by the inquisition, for adopting the system of Copernicus ; this did not prevent the other literati from investigating the discoveries he had made ; and

the court of Rome itself, however terrified with the introduction of novelties in philosophy, as in religion, was compelled at last to admit the possibility, *that* might be true, which demonstration had proved could not be false. So the earth was quietly permitted to revolve round the sun, as the center of our planetary system, without any farther anathema.

But, high as the attainments of the learned rose, the state of morals sunk very low. The dignitaries of the Church were the creatures of courts ; and, as they gained their preferments by the servile arts of flattery, and interest in great men's favor, so they used their emoluments accordingly, in a life of indolence, pleasure and magnificence. The care of souls was a consideration which entered not into their views. The inferior clergy, in their gradations, followed the same steps, and procured patrons by the same means. It must not be denied, that some happy exceptions were found to the general depravity ; but they were treated with contempt, and enmity, and sure to bring down upon themselves the envy and resentment of their brethren, for pretending to be righteous over much, and carrying things too far ; not without insinuations of their hypocrisy, and spiritual pride ; which the others as more honest, disdained.

Among those pre-eminent as authors and theologians, who wished to improve the heart by their writings, and the world by their example, we may justly reckon the seminary of *Port Royal* : from which issued the works of Pascal, Arnaud, Nicole, the fathers of the Jansenists, and by whom, chiefly, all that can be called spiritual religion in France, was preserved, unless we except the mystics, with the excellent Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, and others, who displayed in their conversation and conduct the a-

miable spirit of divine charity ; and, like Enoch, walked with God, amidst all the errors of the false religion which was professed around them. God had, no doubt, still within the Romish pale, a people to the eternal praise of the glory of his grace ; but they were few, and in general of no reputation ; and sure to be the objects of reproach, in proportion to the purity of their lives, and the spirituality of their tempers. Wherever, instead of form and ceremonies, men sought communion with God, and made his word the rule of their conversation, they brought upon themselves animadversion, according to the different dispositions of the governments under which they lived.

I may not stay to expose the corruption of doctrine and morals, in which the Jesuits bore the palm, sure to be defended, or screened by the holy see, because the whole purport of their perversions led to the exaltation of the Pontiff, and establishment of the pillars of his throne. Hence, all the complaints, remonstrances, and detestations, made by their adversaries, produced no effect at Rome. They had usually sufficient credit to procure their own vindication, and the condemnation of their opposers ; and, even in the great contest with the Dominicans, though so many of the fathers, with Augustin, were against them, on the subject of predestination and grace, after a dispute carried on for years, under successive popes, they contrived to ward off the decision against their mighty Molinos ; and the pontiff

AN. 1605. compelled the combatants to make a drawn battle, lest, deciding for the Dominicans against the Jesuits, he should give the Protestants occasion of triumph, and strengthen their cause. Policy, not truth, dictated every measure of the Roman see.

AN. 1640. But the pontiff testified greater partiality to their jesuitical friends, in the cause of the Jansenists,

on the very same subject, which Janfenius, the learned Bishop of Ypres, supported ably, in a book entitled *Augustinus* ; being an exact and faithful epitome of the doctrine which St. Augustin taught, and the Church had so often sanctioned. This book made a very great noise within the Roman pale ; and being the very opposite to the doctrine which the Jesuits taught, they bent their whole force to procure its condemnation, and succeeded. AN. 1653.

The papal bulls, which issued on this occasion, produced in France the most violent controversies on the subject ; but the conflicts, then of importance, between Jesuits and Janfenists, have long since ceased to be such. Suffice it to observe that the worst side carried their point, and armed the magistracy to suppress those whom the pope condemned. The persecuting Church always bears the brand of Antichrist ; the persecuted have presumptive evidence in their favor, that they follow at least the dictates of conscience.

In search of the true Church therefore, and of those who have any pretensions to be ranked among the living members of the body mystical, I am compelled to prefer such as the papal bulls condemned. Instead of the long, ridiculous list of the canonized saints, added by the pontiffs, this century to the Roman calendar, which I must leave to oblivion, saints unknown in earth and heaven, I turn to seek those within the Roman pale, who appear to have escaped the corruptions of the world, and not to have known the depths of satan ; however tinged by superstition, or enslaved by Church prejudices. Among the millions of clergy and laity in this idolatrous Church, debased by superstition, sunk in ignorance, or tied and bound with the chains of their sins, some probably were found, who, seduced by the

dread of schism, and the fear of papal excommunication, continued in the observance of the outward forms, without placing religion in these things ; and believing to the saving of their souls, truly feared God, and wrought righteousness.

Among the *Jansenists* a considerable band appears of faithful confessors, whose works are still read with admiration, and whose real piety deserve to be imitated. I do not readily receive the accusations, that Papists or Protestants have objected to them, as over rigorous and fanatic in their devotion : but I will admit many things might be blameable ; a tincture of popery might drive them to push monkish austerities too far ; and secretly to place some merit in mortification, which, they in general disclaimed : yet, with all that can be said, surely the root of the matter was in them. When I read Jansenius, or his disciples, Pascal or Quesnell, I bow before such distinguished excellence, and confess them my brethren, shall I say, or my fathers. Their principles are pure and evangelical ; their morals formed upon the apostles and prophets ; and their zeal to amend and convert, blessed with eminent success. I will pity the wanderings of a St. Cyran, and allow for the prejudices of education ; but I will ever love and honor those who appear to have loved our lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and dared to suffer for his sake : I believe the Lord of life will honor them, at the day of his appearing and glory.

Among those called *Mystics*, also, I am persuaded some were found who loved God out of a pure heart fervently ; and though they were ridiculed, and reviled, for proposing a *disinterestedness of love* without other motives, and as professing to feel in the enjoyment of the temper itself, an abundant reward, their holy and heavenly

conversation will carry a stamp of real religion upon it, when all their Jesuitical opponents, with the time-serving Bossuet at their head, will be weighed and found wanting. If I pity any thing in Fenelon, it is his submissive publication of the papal bull, which condemned him, conscious to his dying day, that no one of his sentiments was altered. Some will call this weakness, some hypocrisy; but I can suppose a purer reason, his desire of peace, and his dread, least opposition should occasion divisions, which ultimately might produce more evil than good. I will not vindicate the motive or the reasoning; but to such a man as Fenelon, though I blame his conduct, I shall give full credit, that he acted as he thought right in the sight of God. It is pleasant to behold, amidst the darkness of popery such luminaries; and no doubt to this their disputes with the Protestants had greatly contributed. Even those who pertinaciously still adhered to the Church of Rome, were indebted to their adversaries for a portion of the truth and godliness, which they were led to embrace and follow.

CHAP. III.

OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

SUNK to the lowest state of debasement under the Turks, degraded in character, disfigured by superstition, groveling in ignorance, and pining in poverty, little can be hoped from such a communion. Yet were efforts made repeatedly to win them over to the subjection of Rome in vain. The appearances of success always vanished, the prejudices of education prevailed, and attachment to their own forms and ceremonies kept them separate. Even were their submission obtained, it seems but a miserable acquisition. Rome, however, continually maintained a host of her missionaries in the East, endeavoring among all the oriental Christians to gain proselytes; and now and then new bishops were dispatched with a pompous name, to preside over congregations, whose numbers were so few, and poverty so great, that they seemed scarce worth the expence necessary to keep up the appearance. The alms distributed were the most instrumental means of the conversions, which seldom endured longer than the continuance of them: and it is singular enough, that the Greek students, who have been brought to Rome for education, and initiated in all the mysteries of popery, are said, on their return to their native country, generally to have adopted their former profession, and to be the bitterest opposers of the popish pretensions of dominion over the eastern churches.

Among those who have most firmly rejected the attempts of the Roman pontiffs, Cyrillus Lucar may be reckoned—a man of real piety and extensive learning, beyond what usually has filled the chair of Constantinople. After diligently examining the Romish and Protestant opinions, he seemed much more disposed to form a union with the latter than the former; and in consequence corresponded with the Protestants of eminence. This bitterly provoked the Catholics.—The Jesuits, through the French Ambassador at the Porte, exerted all their intrigues to render Cyril odious, and suspected by the Turks. Having gained some envious Greeks to their party, they formed an accusation against the good patriarch, of pretended treason, and procured his death by the Ottoman Emperor's orders. His crime was his piety, and disposition to unite the Greek and reformed churches—an offence inexpiable in the sight of Rome and her satellites. AN. 1638.

Every artifice continued to be employed by the Jesuits to soften down the differences between the churches; and to make it appear that they were of a trifling and indifferent nature; and therefore that the Greeks might be indulged in all their peculiarities, and yet return to the unity of the Church. But all the art employed has never been able to effect the reconciliation; and they appear as distant from each other as ever.—The same attempts have as little succeeded with the other oriental churches. They still maintain their independence, both of Rome and of Constantinople. The Nestorians, the Monophysites, have their separate patriarchs; and their different branches, Cophts and Armenians subsist, though reduced almost to a state of inactivity. The church of Russia, a chief member of the Greek communion, holds little connexion or none with

the patriarchs of Constantinople. It may now be reckoned indeed among the first in extent of empire, yet respecting the life and power of Christianity, very, very little will be found among them: profound ignorance, multiplied superstitions, and most debasing intemperance, mark the clergy and people. It is to be hoped there are exceptions. Our acquaintance with their language is small. I am not informed of any Russian theological work that claims attention, for depth of biblical criticism, or faith unfeigned. A sect, though not of

modern date, is said to have occasioned
AN. 1666. some disturbances in the empire. They

called themselves the multitude of the *elect*, or *Isbraniki*; their adversaries branded them with the title of *Roskolniki*, or the multitude of the *factious*. As we have no explicit account of their tenets, we must be content with the general grounds of their separation from the church of Russia, which they alledged, was on account of the corruptions introduced by the negligence and ambition of their prelates. They affected themselves, extraordinary piety and mortification; and a veneration for the letter of the holy Scriptures, which was carried to an excess of superstition. They would not allow a priest to minister baptism, who had that day tasted brandy. This seemed indeed a prudent precaution; because a Russian cannot be trusted with a bottle to his lips, without emptying the last drop of its contents: but they appeared to harbor an abundance of follies and superstitions; such as esteeming it to be of the last importance, that their priests should give the benediction with three fingers; as with two only, it would be the depth of heresy. However, we must know more of them before we can form a true judgment. It hardly seems probable, that they were a very enlightened sect; but rather a scion from some of

the scattered Paulicians, or Bogomilians, of former days, sprouting afresh, and as they multiplied, awakened fresh attention. They have been excommunicated, dragooned, and exercised with all the gentle corrections of fire, sword, gibbets, imprisonment, and exile, but have maintained their profession, by retiring to the woods and deserts of that forlorn country, where they still subsist, especially among the Calmüks. Since the accession of Peter the Great, they have been treated with mildness, and indulged with toleration. Perhaps there will be found among them a people that shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. I see not through the vast Russian empire, where the truth of godliness is more probably to be sought.

I wish to look round, and discover the living features of animated Christianity in the East; but, alas! all is darkness that may be felt, and deathlike profession only, within the Christian pale. Yet when I see such a man as Cyrillus raised up, and know, that the blessed word of life is in their hands, I cannot but hope there were some happy exceptions to the general ignorance and superstition, and that God had not left himself without witnesses. May their numbers be multiplied more abundantly!

CHAP. IV.

ON THE PROTESTANT CHURCH.

CHRIST is not divided ; unhappily his people are. But if they cultivate the spirit of love and meekness, bearing and forbearing with one another, the little differences of opinion would never be permitted to disturb the unity of the spirit, or to break the bond of peace. There is scarce a man who deserves the name of a real Protestant, so prejudiced as not to acknowledge, that we are all one in Christ Jesus ; why not then love one another out of a pure heart fervently ? The time, I hope, will come—" Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God." It will be happy for the Church of Christ, when divine charity shall enlarge her borders, and bigotry be driven to her gloomy cell.

The Protestant Church comprehends *Lutherans*, the *reformed* or *Calvinists*, and a variety of *other denominations*, that cannot immediately be classed under the two great general divisions.

I. THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

WE have seen the desolations produced by the ambition or bigotry of the house of Austria, instigated by Rome, and her jesuitical crew, hoping that they could

down with it, down even to the ground. The great Head of the Church was otherwise minded. The bush burned and was not consumed. But the Lutheran cause suffered also by the defection of some of its most strenuous

supporters. In the beginning of this century;

AN. 1604. MAURICE, Landgrave of Hesse, a man of

very eminent attainments, embraced, after deep investigation, the Calvinistic system of doctrine : and new modelled the university of Marburg, and the ecclesiastical establishment of Hesse, after the reformed plan : though not without great opposition

AN. 1619, from the Lutheran divines. Yet, though he

thought himself bound to promote the truths, which he had himself embraced ; and to exercise the authority with which he was invested, in his own dominions ; it is to be observed to his honor, that he shewed Christian moderation, and temper in the disputes, which could not but be the consequence : and he is said not to have been chargeable with any acts of oppression or violence, leaving generous liberty of conscience to all his subjects. The ELECTOR of BRANDENBURG follow-

ed his example, and declared for the reform-

AN. 1614. ed religion; without enforcing the doctrine of the decrees, or the decisions of Dort ; but

left every man free liberty to abide, Lutheran or Calvinist, according to his conscience ; dispensing his favors to both, without partiality, and recommending a spirit of conciliation ; to abstain from offensive terms, or injurious aspersions ; consenting that the rites which were objected to might be abolished ; and entreating, that wherein they still differed, they would bear with each other, and cultivate a spirit of peace and patience. But to this the Lutheran clergy refused to consent, and not only excited fierce debates, but stirred up the people to a spirit of discontent, and alienation from their

sovereign, and tumults which only force could suppress. The Saxon divines took part with their brethren, and unhappily blew up the flames of discord, to the great injury of their cause, and the hurt of their university of Wirtemberg, which the Elector was compelled, by the treatment he had received, to forbid his subjects any more to visit.

Good men on both sides lamented, that when the Philistines were upon them, the sons of Israel were setting their swords every man against his fellow; and earnestly wished to reconcile the two great bodies of Protestants together, that they might be more united, and form a firmer phalanx against their popish invaders. To hope for uniformity in opinion was a blessing, in the present state of human infirmity, and under the prejudices of education, not to be expected: but to soften down the angles of asperity—never to dispute passionately—to seek not victory, but truth—to give the most favorable explications to the terms used on both sides—to bring forth the great fundamental principles, in which Calvinists and Lutherans were agreed—and in the deeper and abstruser points of difference, to approach as near as possible—and where they could not unite, to agree to bear with each other in the disputed articles, and to keep them as much as possible from producing vain contention, which only beget ill blood and not conviction—these were the objects of the conciliators. Here, in the reformed, it is allowed, were the first to concede, and make approaches; allowing their Lutheran brethren not to have erred in any fundamental doctrine.—But the Lutheran divines were more tenacious and less yielding, and refused to acknowledge as much of the Calvinistic tenets; and rejected with too much disdain the conciliatory offers of their brethren. Mutual re-

proaches, and recriminations tended not to heal but to widen the breach.

AN. 1615. The peace-loving JAMES I. endeavored to interpose the weight of his influence, and to solicit this desirable union among the Protestant churches. He employed for this end the famous DU MOULIN, to sound the different parties : but he soon grew discouraged, when he found that the Lutherans testified an utter aversion to accede to the proposal.

AN. 1631. However, the French Protestants, in a synod held at Charenton, determined to give their Lutheran brethren a testimony of their cordial regard ; and to open a door for any return which they might judge fit, by declaring “ that the Lutheran profession was truly conformable to the gospel, and free from fundamental errors.” But no overtures were the consequence.

AN. 1631. One conference more indeed was held at Leipzig, between the divines of the two communions ; and the spirit, temper, and moderation with which it was managed, gave hope it would re-unite them. The jealousy of the Lutherans, that some artifice was concealed under the apparent candor and concessions of their brethren, disappointed the happy issue which was expected. After all, the same unchristian distance remained.

AN. 1645. A more comprehensive scheme, which should comprise Catholics, could hardly succeed in Poland.

AN. 1661. Earnest to succeed, the Landgrave of Hesse renewed the attempt to bring the Protestants nearer to each other ; and now the fraternal embrace, which closed the conference, promised greater future union ; at least mutual forbearance and love. But the

moderate men who retired from this pleasing scene, were unable to inspire their Lutheran brethren with their own candor and charity ; and only drew upon themselves the invectives of the bigots, as betraying by their indulgence the cause they were deputed to defend. Thus has it often been the lot of the noblest spirits to desire to do good to the ungrateful and the prejudiced, and to be abused for their labors of love.

What the authority of princes and the weight of synods could not accomplish, individuals might well despair of effecting. Yet one kind and resolute spirit, undismayed by the difficulties, resolved to devote himself to the work ; which during forty years, he unweariedly pursued. Wherever he went and made his object known, he was generally received with kindness, and heard with attention : but after all his toils and travels through the Protestant regions of Europe, he found obstructions insurmountable, and bigotry and prejudice that refused to bend. But he shall not lose his reward. The Prince of Peace will remember JOHN DURY.*
AN. 1631—1674.

The good bishop of Stregnez in Sweden, deserves a memorial for his zealous concurrence with the travelling Scottish pacificator : and CALIXTUS, AN. 1645. the divinity professor of Helmstadt, seconded warmly the same noble design ; but they brought a nest of Lutheran hornets about their ears. The cry of the Church being in danger, drove the peace-making bishop from his see, to a retirement from the clamors of party : and Calixtus was glad to be hid in the grave from the torrent of abuse and misrepresentation.

* JOHN DURY was a Scottish divine, of the Calvinistical persuasion : of whom Mosheim, though a Lutheran, speaks respectfully. He died in 1675.

tation ; as sacrificing truth to conciliation. Thus obstinately did the Lutheran divines reject all approaches to communion with their reformed brethren. Unhappily they were not less divided among themselves. Incensed at those who wished to heal the breaches, and to engage men's hearts in a spirit of union and piety, the larger body of the Lutheran Church, especially the Saxon divines, treated them as innovators in religion, and branded them with the names of *Syncretists* or *Pietists*. An account of these will include the most important concerns of the Lutheran Church ; especially in the point which is the great object which I am pursuing, under every denomination of Christians, to discover the true spiritual Church of Christ.

At the head of the *Syncretists* was CALIXTUS, of whom mention has been made before. The charge laid against him was, his attempt to unite all bodies of professing Christians in mutual forbearance and charity with each other, notwithstanding the points of opinion in which they might differ ; and, if possible, to enable them, without bitterness and mutual anathemas, to meet in some general principles wherein they all agreed ; and to leave all other matters of dispute aside. At least, if any differences were discussed, that it should be done in love and in the spirit of meekness, without breach of communion. He was of opinion, with his friend John Dury, that *the Apostles' creed* contained every article necessary to be believed for salvation ; that the *ten commandments* were a sufficient rule of life ; and *the Lord's prayer* included every essential petition which a Christian needed to ask of God. All, therefore, who held these general principles, might, he trusted, give each other the right hand of fellowship, and hope to meet together in the world of the blessed ; whether Papists,

Reformed, or Lutherans; as each professed to hold these in the same veneration, and to admit their indisputable truth. No man appears a more determined Protestant than Calixtus, or has written with greater force against the errors of the Romish Church; though he was abused as half a Catholic, because he maintained, that in the Church of Rome *the fundamental articles* were still held; and that salvation might there be obtained, even though men were under many mistakes and prejudices of education. He admitted the union of churches was impracticable, under the decisions of the council of Trent; but that the union of charity might be cultivated between the members of the different churches, holding the first common principles of Christianity. The divines of Helmstadt united with their colleague in this endeavor: many of their brethren, at Rintelen, Koninsberg, and Jena, approved the general lines of conciliation proposed by them; but they met with the fiercest opposition, were esteemed as traitors to the Lutheran cause, and apostates from the Lutheran faith: and charged with both inclining to the reformed, and the popish religion. Contradictions so glaring, as only the exasperation of prejudice and party could suppose possible or true. The particulars of all the bitter contests and invectives which this controversy occasioned, with the interposition of the civil magistrate, I shall pass over. It affords but a mortifying lesson of human infirmity, that whoever, or whatever is right, or wrong; wise men, learned men, religious men, should so far deviate from the spirit of truth and meekness. Nor does it give a high opinion of the Saxon divines in particular, who wanted to introduce a new creed of their own sentiments, which could not but have made a division in the Lutheran Church. The amiable design of Calixtus, should it be a mistaken charity, pleaded for lenity at

least, instead of such bitterness and malignity, as *Calovius*, at the head of the Saxon Lutheran doctors expressed : but bigots to churches, and advocates for truth, are very different persons. Did religion, indeed, stand merely in *opinion*, and one line of aberration must not be admitted from what is established in each church, who then can be saved ? The consequences are obvious to every enlarged mind, who is at all conversant with the spirit of true Christianity.

But the divisions which arose on account of *Pietism*, were still more to be lamented, as they served but too awfully to demonstrate, that deep piety in the Lutheran Church was an offensive object, and the pretensions to it judged deserving of the sharpest censures.

The origin of *Pietism* was certainly the apprehension and conviction, that real religion had greatly declined in the Lutheran Church—that the clergy were become too inattentive to the care of men's souls, and too attached to this world in its emoluments ; or too much engrossed with scientific pursuits, foreign to their immediate designation. That there is always too much reason to fear the decline of true godliness, the experience of all ages testifies.

AN. 1670. The excellent SPENER, a man eminent for real truth and godliness, lamented the declensions which he supposed, at least, he beheld around him. He set himself, therefore, to reanimate the languid zeal, and to quicken the diligence of his brethren, by establishing at Frankfort, *societies for religious exercises*, for prayer, praise and mutual communications ; in order to bind each other in a firmer bond, to resist the overflowings of ungodliness, and to bear a living testimony by their conduct, to the purity of the truths which they

professed to believe. A treatise on the disorders of the Church, and the prevailing corruption of manners, with the means best suited to remove them, was circulated by this good man, and awakened very general attention. A variety of persons in different places, accordingly associated on the plan which Spener had recommended: and, as could not but be the case, awakened the jealousy, and provoked the enmity of the clergy and others, whose conversation they reproved; not merely by the exhibition of a different conduct, but sometimes by rebukes and charges, not always, perhaps, dictated by prudence, or the meekness of charity. These associations, therefore, met with much opposition: and, as popular odium, or the licentiousness of the baser sort, instigated by their enemies, often interrupted their assemblies, the charge of disturbing the peace of the public was laid to their door: and, as usually some wild fire is ready to mingle itself with the sacred flame on the altar of truth, persons of an enthusiastic or turbulent disposition, sometimes united with the Pietists, and gave their adversaries occasion to blaspheme.

The alarm which had gone out against the rising sect, collected greater force, and was viewed as a matter of more serious import, when the learned professors, FRANKIUS, SCHADIUS, and ANTONIUS, with others, uniting cordially with Spener in his pious designs, began to consider the causes of the decline, which was too evident: and supposed they could trace them principally to the improper manner in which young men at the universities had been trained up for the ministry. Discarding, therefore the metaphysical mode of tuition, and the jargon of the schools, where Aristotle's subtleties had been often more studied than the Bible; and a rage for controversies of no real import to improve

the understanding, or to affect the heart, occupied the time, and exalted the conceit of the captious disputants ; they resolved to alter their mode of lecturing. Taking the oracles of God for their thesis, they endeavored to make these pure fountains of wisdom and knowledge better understood, both respecting the *doctrines* therein contained, and the *application* of them to the consciences of their pupils ; in order to the production of the genuine fruits of righteousness and true holiness.

AN. 1689. These *scriptural exercises* excited vast attention. Multitudes pressed to hear them :

and that many were affected by them, and brought to a happy change in their religious conduct, even prejudice could not deny. Malignity, indeed, wished to misrepresent, what had not only its novelty to offend, but the real reproof contained in such conduct to irritate. The other professors charged them with exciting tumults, and promoting animosities in the university ; and, being abundantly the majority, these good men were called to a public trial, for the innovations which they had attempted ; and though declared free from heresy or immorality, were forbidden to proceed any farther with the plans of religious instruction, which they had commenced.

AN. 1692. Suspended thus from their attempts to edify the students at Leipzig in sacred literature, and driven from their professorships for the *Pietism* imputed to them, the university of Halle invited Franck and Antonius thither ; and Spener had a similar offer, which he accepted from the Elector of Brandenburg, at Berlin. They pursued there the same line of conduct, and were attended by the same numerous audience and pupils. The professors and pastors of the Lutheran university of Wirtemberg, were highly incensed at, and condemn-

ed these novel practices as detrimental to AN. 1695. the interests of the Lutheran Church, over which they watched with jealous care : probably they felt it as a reflection upon themselves, that these biblical professors should attract such attention ; and their societies formed for prayer and religious exercises, raise an imputation of negligence on the established pastors. For the flame of Pietism had spread through all the Lutheran churches, and in every city, town and village, persons arose, professing to be stirred up by a divine impression on their minds, to revive the cause of religion, and to rouse the attention of their neighbors to greater seriousness in the concerns of an eternal world. As persons of all conditions and sexes were affected with Pietism, artisans, mechanics, and laborers, met together for religious exercises. The illiterate, as well as the more instructed, prayed and exhorted in these societies : and, as could not but be the case, when the numbers were considerable, and some among them more forward, zealous, and imprudent, than well-informed, occasions of reproach were taken against them ; and some, perhaps, justly : and, as is always the case, the irregularities or improper conduct of mistaken individuals, were laid to the charge of the whole body. The clergy especially took a part against these Pietists ; and the magistrates being instigated by their fears or jealousies, severe laws were enacted to suppress these societies, and prevent the spreading of these innovations in the Lutheran Church.

AN. 1689. The term *Pietist*, which was given in derision by the scoffers to those who attended Franckius and his associates, and lived in a course of strict piety, " was afterwards," says Mosheim, " applied to all who, distinguished by excessive austerity of manners, regard.

less of *truth* or *opinion*, were only intent upon *practice*, and turned the whole vigor of their efforts towards the attainments of *religious feelings* and *habits*." Mosheim was a Lutheran divine, philosophic, and no Pietist. Yet his partial representation speaks nothing unfavorable, when he is compelled to add, as a faithful historian, "*that persons of eminent wisdom and sanctity, remarkable for their adherence to truth and love of piety, bore commonly the same opprobrious name.*" And, in another place, "*that none could despise their intentions, without appearing the enemy of practical religion.*" The truth of the matter is, that zealous godliness, as is usual, provoked the reproach of the cross. But the learned ecclesiastic mistakes, or misrepresents the real character of Franck and his colleagues. So far were they from being regardless of *truth* and *opinion*, that no men more rigidly contended for, or taught more explicitly, the *fundamental doctrines* of Christianity. They, indeed were no bigots to the Lutheran profession, though they preferred it; but they supposed many of their reformed brethren, equally sound in the fundamental articles of faith with themselves: and therefore they would not refuse their friendship and society, because of the *opinions* in which they differed. So far, indeed, the charge may be admitted in the fullest latitude, that these good men looked upon the tenets of *barren orthodoxy*, when not attended with divine power in the conscience, and purity in the conduct, as nothing worth; and were the more earnest to inculcate the necessity of faith, with its effects, than to establish a rigid conformity with the Lutheran definitions. Why it should be supposed that their manners were *austere to excess*, I see no one proof produced; and am disposed to believe from all I have read or known, that they were as remarkably amiable in their behavior, as kind in their spirit, and compassionate to-

wards the feeble minded. Nor in a day of great dissipation and corruption of manners, which Mosheim every where confesses and laments, ought a peculiar carefulness to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, to be branded with so harsh an insinuation. As to their efforts to attain *religious feelings and habits*, the author has not perfectly understood the subject, if he supposes they meant to *substitute religious feelings*, in the place of *practical godliness*, which he allows them to have pursued; and, if he means to put a contempt on *religious feelings, or habits*; I own, I wonder how any man can be supposed to exercise divine love to God or man; to live in real habits of devotion; or to read and believe the great and precious promises of God's word; and not *feel* the outflowings of desire, and the sensations of delight. A religion *without feeling* is certainly not the religion of the Psalmist, nor compatible with the graces of the Spirit, described by St. Paul. But *the private meetings*, in which their devotional exercises were held, and the feelings of their hearts poured out in prayer and praise, were regarded as very enthusiastic, and reprobated by those, who, not being at all inclined to join with them, were ready to justify their own superior excellence, by degrading their brethren with imputations of fanatic devotion, and unnecessary austerity.

Nothing can better express wherein this austerity consisted, than the very account Mosheim himself gives of the motives which influenced these good men, and the steps they took to revive the decaying interest of the true Lutheran religion. They imputed to the clergy the great cause of the declension evident. They supposed their manner of preaching unedifying; their conduct not purely exemplary; and their negligence of their holy function, as highly blameable. To this they attri-

buted chiefly the overflowings of ungodliness, the progress of vice, and the general carelessness about religious worship in the Church, in private families, and secret devotion. As they esteemed this the source of all the evils, which they saw and lamented, it was natural for them to begin at the fountain head : and as this necessarily implied reflection on the pastors themselves, and on the universities which had sent them forth so ill qualified for their charge, both were highly exasperated against these reformers, and set their faces against their schemes for amelioration. It is pleasing to trace the steps which they took, and the amendments they proposed, in their preparation of young men for the ministry, their enemies themselves being the reporters.

They laid it down as a sacred axiom, that no man could have a *divine call* into the Church as a minister, unless his heart was filled with the love of Christ, and of the souls redeemed by his blood—he must be unexceptionable in holy conversation—and endued with a competent measure of literature, especially well versed in the holy Scriptures. They therefore banished the scholastic theology, which ministered only questions instead of godly edifying—they avoided dwelling strongly on the points in dispute between Christians ; and discouraged all bitterness of controversy, though they neglected not to arm their pupils with divine truth. The Scriptures were the first object which they commended to their study and attention, making all philosophic pursuits and ornamental literature a subordinate part of education. This was interpreted by their adversaries into a contempt for human learning, though confessedly none had a larger share of it than these worthy professors ; and their pupils were no dishonor to them in this behalf ; but because they treated as of less importance

the defence of the outworks of Christianity, such as merely arguing on its evidence and reasonableness ; and rather preferred an immediate attack on the conscience by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God ; the wise apologists and disputers of this world charged them with degrading the dignity of polemic theology, and giving the enemies of Christianity advantage.

In consequence of these views of the internal spirit of a minister of Christ, they insisted upon the necessity of a *solemn dedication* of himself to God ; and that every clergyman ought to be an example and model of the doctrines which he taught, and the practices he recommended : affirming, to the great indignation of their brethren, that no man could be truly called to the ministry of the gospel, who was not in his own soul a sharer of the blessings of divine grace, and a pattern of his own precepts : a strictness this, in the eyes of the laxer professors, which exposed the Pietists to much censure, and involved them in many disputes, “ whether a bad ecclesiastic could be a *true* minister of the sanctuary,” and such like unprofitable questions. They recommended to their pupils to preach the simplicity which is in Christ, and not to be tied down to any phraseology that scholastic theology had sanctioned : but the most offensive part of their instructions to the young students for orders, was an abstinence from a variety of things, in which the professors of religion generally indulged themselves. Some of these, though in their nature not absolutely sinful, they supposed to have a strong tendency to divert the mind from serious objects, and to corrupt the heart with inordinate love of pleasure. Others they reckoned in themselves *immoral*, as the stage, and such like entertainments ; gaming of all kinds ; books of a corrupting tendency, however ha-

morous or well written; and sitting long at feasts, or wine, where, though not intemperate themselves, their presence might embolden others: nor did they reckon as *innocent*, but rather dangerous; and to be avoided, all promiscuous meetings of the sexes, for *dancing* and *jolity of every kind*; and even the *sports of the field* were prohibited to their pupils, as not seemingly and of good report for ministers of the sanctuary. Many thought these instructions unreasonable and severe, and that the clergy might well indulge themselves and countenance their people in what they were pleased to term, *a little innocent pleasure*. Disputes on these subjects arose; and, as is the case with disputes in general, they were carried on sometimes with too much asperity.

But nothing excited in the clergy and others, as has been hinted before, more general opposition than the *societies*, which the Pietists every where instituted for religious exercises; and into which they desired to admit none, whose exemplary conduct did not adorn their profession. This kind of separation from the world, and pious singularity, was peculiarly offensive.

That among the multitudes who were united with the PIETISTS in these societies, some betrayed intemperate zeal, and occasionally broached such erroneous opinions, was to be expected and lamented. None, however, more sharply condemned all such things than the body of the Pietists themselves.

Whether Arnold is to be reckoned in the number of those censurable in this respect, I know not. His ecclesiastical history is charged by Mosheim as too partial to heretics. The bitter and sarcastic writings of Dippelius certainly deserve censure. I waive the mention of the visionaries, such as Peterfen or the Theoso-

phists, revived by Jacob Boehmen and others, who, though for a time they glared as the meteor in the sky, and attracted the eyes of gazing curiosity, suggested nothing tending to the revival of general religion and piety; any more than the tribe of prophets and prophetesses, who alarmed the fears of the credulous, had their day, and were forgotten.

Two things, however, deserve to be particularly observed. First, That among the Lutherans an evident great departure had begun from the life of godliness, which animated the first reformers. Scientific pursuits were more in request than gospel purity; and, as is too observable, the decline of piety and the progress of philosophy are always accompanied with an equal proportion of infidelity, and cavilling at the doctrines of revelation—a charge not peculiar to the Lutheran Church, but awfully applicable alike to the Reformed, as we shall see, and, as has been noted, to the Romish communion. But Infidel writings had not yet prevailed with the same open contempt, as at present, of the religion of their country: though the philosophic tribe, with Leibnitz at their head, was paving the way: and Martin Seidel published his impious opinion of the person and office of Jesus Christ, which in the main hath found since more strenuous defenders than he could muster in his own day.*

But, 2dly. A more pleasing feature of the Lutheran Church appeared in the evident and wide-spread revi-

Seidel, denied that Jesus was the Messiah predicted in the old testament; he taught that the Messiah had not come: that Jesus came only to republish, and explain the law of nature. To rid himself of objections he denied the divine authority of the whole new testament.

val of godliness, which, however opposed by philosophers, disliked by the clergy, or ridiculed by the multitude, produced a host of confessors. That some really good men might have been prejudiced against the Pictists, may be admitted. They too hastily entertained the unfavorable reports of their maligners, and were led away by their misrepresentations; but among those who bore the name of Pictists, or were at least supposed to be *pictistically inclined*, the vitality of the spiritual Church of Christ was chiefly to be found. The lives and labors of these men would have been an ornament to whatever church they had belonged. I dwell with greater pleasure on these, than on the votaries of Aristotle, or the reformers of the philosophic school, the learned, and in their day men of renown. I am neither in pursuit of the Stagyrice, nor his correctors, of the new philosophy nor of the old, of Theosophists, or metaphysicians, but of the true and faithful followers of the Son of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity.

Before I close the account of the Lutheran Church, their attempts to send the light of divine truth into heathen lands, deserve an honorable memorial. The Danes have been particularly mindful to communicate to their colonies and settlements in Asia, Africa and America, as well as Greenland, a knowledge of the salvation which is by Jesus Christ.

AN. 1634. A zealous individual, the learned Heyling of Lubec, penetrated into Abyssinia with this intention; and recommending himself to the Emperor's favor, rose to the highest office in the state. In returning to Europe for missionary assistance, he perished by the way: nor has it since appeared, that he left any abiding trace of successful labors behind him. The pious Duke of Saxe Gotha wished to renew the experi-

ment, in the person of the Abbot Gregory, an Abyssinian, who had resided for a while in Europe.

AN. 1657. He was unfortunately shipwrecked on his voyage, and that good design failed. Wan-

AN. 1663. sieb, who offered to supply his place, grievously disappointed the expectation of his noble patron, and proved himself unworthy the office which he had undertaken: * since that time nothing I believe hath been attempted in Abyssinia of a missionary nature. But in such a cause surely we should never be weary in well-doing, or faint at our disappointments. The time shall come, when Ethiopia and Saba shall stretch out their hands unto God. In this noble contention of zeal, the Lutheran and Reformed Church may strive without the breach of charity; and blessed are they who shall arise to devote themselves to this self-denying service, and become the honored instruments in this glorious cause.

II. OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES.

THE Reformed Churches continued rather on the increase, except in France. The loss of the Lutherans in Germany, by the defection of the Prince of Hesse and Elector of Brandenburg, was followed

AN. 1688. by the Duke of Holstein, and the Saxon Duke of Dessau. And in Denmark, multitudes departed from the Lutheran tenets respecting the Eucharist, to the more rational and scriptural ones held by the reformed. But the great accession to the Re-

* Wansieb went no farther than Egypt; and wholly failing of executing his commission, he became ostensibly a convert to popery.

formed Churches, was principally owing to the wide extended settlements of the English in North America, and their possessions in Jamaica, and the Leeward Islands: whither they carried their own profession of faith, and extended it among the Indian tribes and the unhappy negroes, who, though too much neglected, were sometimes the objects of instruction in religious knowledge. I hardly mention the establishments in India and the East, which as yet formed considerable factories; and where the attention to commerce left too little care about religion.

England itself, a chief member of the Reformed Churches, happily, as has been mentioned, escaped the snares which popery had laid for her; and though with many blemishes, continued a glorious Church. Yet though enabled to struggle against her foreign adversaries, convulsions within, and that between brethren of the same faith, shook the foundations of Church and State to the centre.

AN. 1603. JAMES I. who ascended the throne after Elizabeth, with the cordial approbation of all parties, was unhappily a wavering, unsettled character. With the pride of a pedant, and the dupe of flattery, he entertained a high opinion of his own king-craft. Educated in the Kirk, he had professed the most unshaken attachment to the Scottish Church, and her presbytery, "*as the purest Kirk under the sun;*" but he had no sooner crossed the Tweed, and met the bowing bishops, and the magnificence of the English court, than he relished them far beyond the land of his nativity, and thought them more congenial to the high monarchical principles which he was disposed to entertain. The Puritans were sanguine in their expectation of favor and indulgence under a Scottish king, brought up a-

mong their brethren ; but they soon found themselves woefully mistaken ; as James far preferred the pomp of cathedral worship to the simplicity of the Genevian ceremonial. Yet as he loved to display his own theological knowledge, and gloried in his pacific principles, he held a grand conference at Hampton Court, with the professed intention of reconciling the differences between the Church and the puritans : in which he affected to set the impartial umpire. But the impious flattery of Whitgift gained him wholly. Won by the high flown compliments paid to his wisdom, his self conceit greedily swallowed what the courtly prelate exclaimed with rapture, that the king spake by the special assistance of God's spirit." Whilst the hypocritical Bancroft, in the same strain of adulation, falling upon his knees before him, " protested his heart melted with joy, that Almighty God had given them such a king, as since Christ's time had not been."* These incense bearing bishops beat the stiff Puritans hollow ; who could offer no such adulation.† Besides their proposals for church government, accorded not with his high prerogative principles, to which a hierarchy and lord bishops, his supporters, were much more agreeable. A few trifling alterations in the liturgy, left the Puritan party as discontented as ever. Respecting doctrine, no alteration had yet been whispered. The bishops held the Calvinistic system, and abhorred popery. The excellent Abbott who filled the see of Canterbury, and was

* Though I hope Whitgift and Bancroft were good men and good bishops, yet historic impartiality compels me to condemn their conduct so destitute of the simplicity which is in Christ. (Author's note.)

† He was one of the eight Oxford Divines, who made under James, the present translation of the New Testament.

firm in attachment, had been strongly fixed in Calvinistic principles. He was a man of uncommon piety and gentleness of spirit, an utter enemy to all constraint in matters of conscience ; and willing to indulge his dissenting brethren, as many of the other bishops thought, to a fault. It was during his government of the church, that the famous synod of Dort was held, of which I shall speak hereafter, and King James, always great in religious disputes, dispatched three divines of eminence to attend, as from the reformed Church of England, with their other brethren, to decide on the important controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. The excellent and amiable Hall, afterwards bishop of Norwich, was one of them.

Though James acceded to the condemnation of the Arminians, the articles of the Church of England being till then at least, held indisputably Calvinistic, yet his dislike to the Puritans, whom he permitted his bishops to persecute, led him to a more ceremonious worship, and a fickleness in leaning to the doctrine which he had condemned : and records remain, which lead to just suspicion of his strong inclination to popery, as more conformed to the despotism he always affected and desired ; and his rage to match Charles the heir-apparent with a popish princess, justly alarmed the jealousy of every true Protestant.

In his hatred of the Puritans ; his thirst for despotic power unfettered by parliaments ; his partiality to Rome ; and favor towards those who espoused the Arminian principles, and the pageantry of ceremonial worship, Charles I. exceeded his father ; instigated and influenced by Laud, whom he had raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury : a prelate of the most insolent

temper, and the most superstitious. Neither justice nor compassion stood in his way, when the Puritans were to be oppressed, insulted and ruined,* Many of them were driven from their native land, and fled to other countries of Europe and America, and more it is said were with Cromwell actually embarked, when an order compelled their stay, to submit to the severities that should be exercised upon them. AN. 1637.

Driven by these ill-advisers on his ruin, Charles armed those with despair, who felt that resolute resistance only could break the yoke of bondage, ecclesiastical and civil, from their necks. I pretend not to vindicate or palliate the violences and crimes that followed, when the Puritans of different sects uniting under their

* AN. 1630. A single trait of Laud's character drawn from his own diary, will delineate the man better than any painter. Dr. Leighton, one of the Puritans, was, by the archbishop's instigation, condemned in the Star Chamber to the most atrocious and ignominious punishment. When sentence was pronounced in court, Laud pulling off his cap, and lifting up his eyes to Heaven, gave thanks to God who had enabled him to behold this vengeance on his enemies, and he thus records the execution of the sentence :

"Nov. 6.—1. He was severely whipt before he was set in the pillory—2. Being set in the pillory he had one of his ears cut off—3. One side of his nose was slit up—4. He was branded on the cheek with a red-hot iron, with the letters S. S. On that day sen- night, his sores upon his back, ear, nose and face being not yet cured, he was whipped again at the pillory in Cheapside, cutting off the other ear, flitting the other side of his nose, and branding the other cheek."

Of what a spirit must that man have been, that could with apparent satisfaction record in a private diary, such an act of cruelty, injustice and malignity, perpetrated under the cloak of law and religion ! (Author's note.)

leaders first overturned the government, and then fell under the servitude of a protector and a military rule, which they had unintentionally contributed to erect. *Really good* men are always the few in every denomination. And as their principles forbid them to seek this world as their kingdom, or to obtain power and influence by undue means, they are scarcely ever the persons who lead their party, but are compelled to swim with the stream, and of two evils to chuse the least. Hence in all revolutions, the power lodges in the hands of the ambitious, the violent, the crafty, and the men of least conscience, whatever piety may be pretended, when it can be made subservient to their purpose. And thus all parties in power have equally abused it ; and the Puritans meanly as unchristianly retaliated upon the bishops and clergy, all the ill-usage and intolerance of which they had themselves so heavily complained. Indeed respecting real religion, Charles's character and conduct was little less equivocal than Cromwell's. And though in moral excellence the one will be allowed the better man, the other, whether fanatic or hypocrite, was certainly the abler politician, a firmer antagonist to the papacy, and a more strenuous supporter of the Protestant cause.

It was in the midst of these convulsions, that *the Independents* arose from very lowly beginnings, to the summit of influence : preferred by Cromwell to Presbyterians and Episcopalians ; both of whom he more dreaded, as ready to erect a powerful government in the Church, inimical to that which he wished to establish.

The *Brownists* were the original flock. From Leyden, Robinson, their teacher, re-imported the tenets of that sectary with considerable improvements, and they spread with the greatest rapidity. In doctrine they were perfectly of accord with the reformed, and with the ar-

ticles of the Church. In discipline, they maintained the independence of each congregation, as a complete Church in itself. They allowed not every man to minister on his own motion, but only such as were *called by the Church*, and who *ought to be endued with competent learning*. They avowed submission to the civil powers, and that *a kingly government, bounded by just and wholesome laws, is both allowed by God, and also a good accommodation unto men*. But the truth seems to be, that though they could submit to this government, they preferred, and wished with the Anabaptists, and other sectaries, a republic, in preference to a monarchy; and, whilst it lasted, were its steadiest supporters. Many excellent men were of this denomination, eminent for knowledge as piety, among whom Dr. Owen holds a distinguished place. After the restoration they sunk very low. At the revolution they formed a union with the Presbyterians, but continued few comparatively; till of later years their congregations have greatly increased from causes I shall detail hereafter.

AN. 1647. During the scenes of contention and turbulence, in which church government bore so great a part, various sects sprung up, many of whose names are only preserved as monuments of human folly. One only continuing to our days, deserves a more particular attention, the sect of the *Quakers*. Their apostle, George Fox, a shoemaker, supposing himself divinely inspired, rushed forth to proclaim war against all past and present modes of church government, as *babylonish inventions*. The clergy, and all forms of religious worship, were particular objects of his abhorrence. He and his followers often entered the churches, expressly to interrupt the public service, and revile the ministers. Women as well as men joined in these disorderly proceedings; and were often committed to prison by the

magistrate, as disturbers of the peace ; in which sufferings they gloried. Gentle and mild as the present race appears, the first founders of quakerism were violent, unruly, and headstrong ; and exclusive of the matter which they pretended to teach, their manners were as highly exceptionable for their turbulence, as for the singularities they affected. When the first ebullition had exhibited the most blameable instances of fury, immodesty, and folly approaching to madness, the next generation softened down into simpler manners, and a more rational procedure. During the protectorate they were the violent and avowed enemies of Cromwell, whose dread of them for a while induced him by the rigorous arm of punishment, to endeavor to suppress their fanatic rage ; but finding it in vain, he confined himself to diligence in watching their motions, and counteracting the mischief which he apprehended from them.

Under Charles II. the famous Robert Barclay drew up his apology, and endeavored to render their theological system more plausible, and divested of all that the first more fanatical preachers had broached of error and absurdity. Still two things remained, which exposed them to the greatest trouble and vexations: Holding the *unlawfulness of oaths*, they refused to swear allegiance to the government, and a like holding the *unlawfulness of tithes*, the law alone enforced the payment ; a method when constantly to be recurred to, as troublesome to the plaintiff, as it was vexatious and finally injurious to the defendant ; who was compelled at last to pay, with costs of suit, often far exceeding the original demand.

James II. favored them with all sectaries, insidiously hoping by this means to gain an easier toleration for his Catholic brethren. And he had an especial regard for their chief man, William Penning, the well known found-

er of the present flourishing colony of Pennsylvania; whither he led a large body of his brethren to escape the vexations to which they were continually subjected at home.

William the Third, the greater recoverer of our national liberties, embraced them in his generous toleration, and indulged them in their peculiarities. Since that time they have in general proved dutiful subjects, and contributed greatly to the prosperity of the commonwealth by their industry and frugality.

Their fundamental doctrine is derived from the ancient mystic school, "That in every human being there is an eternal light, or Christ within, a portion of the same eternal reason that exists in God." On this leading principle all their system depends; which necessarily excluding the idea of the vicarious substitution of Christ, terminates ultimately and really in *refined deism*. This *reason* is the same in every man. Jews, Turks, and heathen; and requires only to be brought into exercise, in silence, meditation, and the removal of the envelopements of carnal appetites, which obstruct its sublimation in order to rise into perfection.

All being alike endued with this *inward light*, all have an equal right, whether men or women, to edify their brethren by its emanations, as they feel the motions of the internal word. Forms of devotion, hymns or sacraments are therefore superfluous: even the holy Scriptures themselves have no more authority than the discourses of those who have the same inspirer.

To procure the subdual of the animal man, that would bury the divine seed in darkness, the greatest abstemiousness of living is to be observed, and every in-

dulgence avoided : not only all amusements are to be renounced as criminal, but all shew of politeness, or respect of persons, is absolutely to be abstained from. These form the most distinguishing peculiarity in Quaker manners.

But to return to the thread of the English Church History. When after the turbulence of the civil war, on the death of Cromwell, Charles II. was
AN. 1660. restored, the former persecutions of the Puritans and Dissenters were renewed, as soon as Charles was settled on the throne ; and episcopal government set up in Scotland, as well as England ; and by the act of uniformity all ministers were ejected from their cures, and prohibited from teaching, who
AN. 1662. objected to the prelatical government, and to be re-ordained by bishops. After scenes of violence and oppression on the one hand, and opposition, loud murmurs and invectives on the other, some men of gentle tempers wished to soften down all the asperities of Christian brethren, and to induce them to a greater union, or tolerance, both in doctrine and discipline ; that Episcopalians, with Presbyterians and Independents, the two great sects might coalesce, and then the rest would be more easily brought in. The pacificators, though attached to episcopacy, and the established worship, wished to concede its necessity as a *divine institution*, and essential to the being of the Church, though contended for its antiquity ; and as contributive to the *well-being* of the Church. They would not therefore exclude from communion those who preferred other forms of government or worship, whether abroad or at home. And as to *doctrines*, they desired to reduce them to fewer heads, in which Calvinists and Arminians might meet, leaving the abstruser points of differ-

ence, as not essential to salvation, to be held by each without provoking contention, or exciting bitterness of spirit. These conciliatory divines were termed *Latitudinarians*, and though confessedly eminent for learning, and of blameless manners, drew upon themselves the bitter reproaches of the rigid on both sides; as men destitute of real principles of religion, and fit for any change.

But these attempts proved abortive, and it was only on another revolution of government, that toleration delivered those from many penal laws, who objected to subscribe the act of uniformity.

That a great decline in the life of true Christianity towards the end of this century was observable, is generally agreed. It had made rapid strides in the reign of Charles the Second, at whose accession the profligate manners of the court encouraged every abomination. The rigid maxims of the Puritans, with their starched persons, were held in aversion and turned into ridicule. Men easily and rapidly passed to the extremes of vice, to avoid the suspicion of the semblances of piety. And as a life of dissipation was in fashion, religion began to be a contemptible thing. Hence, since peculiar seriousness branded a man as puritanical, and effectually prevented all church advancement, the clergy took peculiar care to escape, as far as possible, from what must destroy their hopes of preferment, and not to be righteous overmuch, or sharp rebukers of courtly immoralities.

Theological subjects also began exceedingly to give place to literature more polite, and knowledge more scientific. The candidates for the ministry at the universities were diverted by the classics, buried in math-

ematics, or bewildered in metaphysics ; and the Bible, if not among the proscribed books, was neglected grievously ; and it would hardly have been a matter of good report in college, to have it said that a man read and studied the Scriptures diligently, except as a matter of science. Thus men made vast progress in all branches of human learning, whilst biblical studies, especially in any devotional way, were little attended to.

From the dregs of former sects, one is said to have left pernicious effects, and is branded with the name of *Antinomian*, carrying the reformed doctrines respecting the decrees to an abuse before unknown. These pleaded, “ because the elect must be saved, that all calls, admonitions and exhortations were vain ; that nothing was to be preached but the promises in Christ. And as it was admitted, that the elect never fall finally from grace, they suggested, that a man might live in the grossest crimes, and continue a believer ; and, not being under the law would not have sin imputed to him, being complete in Christ.” The numbers indeed of those who *professed* their tenets were very few, whilst too many who still held the Calvinistic system, lived as if they believed them to be true.

But a far more pregnant cause of this declension than any other, arose from the new method of preaching, adopted by the latitudinarian divines abovementioned, who being chiefly Arminians in opinion, wished to avoid the peculiar and characteristic doctrines of Christianity, which had been so much dwelt upon formerly, and to confine their instructions to the beauty of virtue, and the force of moral obligation. Thus, without the great mainspring of Christianity, they labored in most admired compositions, to teach men to be virtuous, till all power of godliness was lost ; and an awful demonstra-

tion was given, that when the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, is not taught and felt, all other endeavors to correct the morals of mankind will be impotent and vain.

By these men also a singular schism was introduced into the Church, towards the end of the century, when, on the abdication of James II. and the accession of William III. a number of the episcopal bench, who were high in their notions of royal prerogative, as well as in the divine right of episcopacy, and bound to the hereditary line of Stuart by principles of passive obedience and non-resistance, refused to acknowledge William III. as a lawful King. They were consequently deposed, and their sees filled by the most eminent of the latitudinarian doctors, Tillotson, Moore, Patrick, Kidder, Fowler and Cumberland; who made no scruple of occupying the vacant bishoprics; and were esteemed by the high Church party, who espoused the ejected bishops' cause, as robbers and intruders; and charged with the deadly crimes of rebellion against God and the King, and with schism of the Church. Thus two parties arose, more peculiarly distinguished than before, of *high churchmen*, the excluded non-jurors, and all those who approved their conduct, and held the same opinions of monarchy and episcopacy: though to keep their preferments, they took the oaths, and submitted to King William. The other party, more moderate, or *low-churchmen*, entertained more liberal opinions respecting the people's right in certain cases, to chuse their own governors, and of the mitigated ecclesiastical authority, which claimed no dominion over the consciences of men, or privileges, but under acts of parliament.

To this day the same parties subsist; though the high-churchmen are reduced very low: and, indeed, if these new bishops, according to the high-church princi-

ples, were intruders, rebellious and schismatical, and all their ordinations invalid, there is hardly an ecclesiastic in the land who does not derive his sacred character through them and their successors : and, therefore, according to high-church principles, their ministrations are null and void ; but though the pride and intolerance of some who occupy these high places, are much the same as in their predecessors, and have procured them the character of high-churchmen ; they chuse not to admit the invalidity of the powers, which have advanced and consecrated them to their present eminence ; content with the honor and emoluments, and not disposed to quit their stations, through any scruple about the legality of their appointment.

It must be remarked, that however declining the state of religion at the end of the century appeared, never had England produced so many, or so able writers on sacred subjects of every kind, as in the former part of it. Of these the works of many will live to edify the latest posterity : among them some of the English bishops maintain a high rank. The Puritan divines were remarkably laborious, and deep in biblical literature. But latterly a great change was perceivable. The men of the first and best generation were gathered to their fathers—another race of finer polish arose, less attached to the characteristic doctrines of Christianity. Arminianism in principle generally prevailed ; and ingenious defences of Christianity against the infidels, and compositions of an admired purity of the moral kind, were in the highest estimation. The great doctrines of the fall, and its consequences—the corruption of human nature—the redemption by atonement—the justification of a sinner by faith alone—and the necessity of the influence of the Holy Ghost to produce all purity of heart and life—these, and the like topics, grew out of

vogue, and gave place to the more philosophic system of moral suasion, metaphysical reasoning, and ethical essays on virtue, its beauty and obligations. Yet there remained some, many, faithful adherents to the Calvinistic doctrines of the articles; and even Bishop Burnet, not too much attached to them, owns, that however generally subscribed by the Arminians for preferment, they were certainly inconsistent with their opinions; and that this subscription was a great violation of ingenuousness. Not that all religion rested with the Calvinists alone: that it chiefly did, may be concluded from the lives of the dissenters, who were certainly more strict in general, more pious and irreproachable, than their countrymen of the established Church; and such was the change now wrought in sentiment, that if there were any in the Church who preached the Calvinistic doctrine, and maintained a peculiar separation of themselves from the world, they were often branded as Presbyterians. Yet among those who held the Arminian principles and high church ideas, there were men of uncommon excellence and piety, such as Bishop Kenn and others, whose primitive manners truly adorned their Christian profession. The regularity and decencies of worship were then also observed in many more families, and of the great and noble, than at present. These the laxity and growing dissipation of our day have almost utterly discarded. I will not affirm, that there was in that age more true religion among the superior ranks of life, than in our day; though I believe there was: certainly, however, the forms and appearances of it were more respectably maintained.

But there is one that seeth and judgeth. The Lord knoweth those that are his. We must leave the final decision to himself: and whilst we speak the painful re-

sult of our own convictions, we may still comfortably hope, where the blessed book of God was so generally diffused, and works of such excellent instruction multiplied, that many, very many amidst the great prevalence of evil, and the unchristian conversation around them, held fast the faithful word, and lived in the practice and died in the comfort of true Christianity.

SCOTLAND.

BEFORE the close of the former century, the Reformation, after a sharp struggle, had been established in Scotland, and that kingdom had cast off the popish yoke. As is usually the case on such occasions, the very collision of the adverse parties had struck out sparks of burning zeal, on the one side to suppress, and on the other to spread, tenets rendered more dear and important, by the very sufferings which they brought on the confessors. Thus the sacred flame of truth had kindled in many a faithful bosom. Knox and his zealous associates had issued forth to preach the everlasting gospel and rapidly spread the evangelical doctrines through the land. The Church government was as nearly as possible conformed to the Genevian model: and James I. who had been brought up in the Kirk, professed the most zealous attachment to it, as the purest Church upon earth.

Many burning and shining lights, which the succinctness of this history will not allow me particularly to specify, illumined that northern region in the long reign of this monarch. During his residence in Scotland, the bitter disputes about prelacy and presbyterianism, were rather compromised than conclusively settled.

But on the accession of the Scottish monarch to the English crown, they revived with all unchristian temper. Gained to the hierarchy, James cast his weight into that scale, to the great disgust of the majority of his northern subjects, and compelled them reluctantly to submit to an episcopal regimen. But the discontented increasing, and more violent measures being pursued by his unhappy son, and the bishops who presided in the Scottish Church, a convulsion followed, which terminated in the overthrow of monarchy and episcopacy. By dire experience the unhappy Charles the first now found, that he had no refuge among subjects, whose affections he had alienated by supporting an ecclesiastical regimen, which they abhorred. The very army to whom he fled for protection, basely sold and delivered him up into the hands of his enemies; and left one more record of experience to princes, how dangerous it is to irritate men's minds, by pains and penalties for religious opinions.

Cromwell's dominion was as ill-brooked by the Scottish nation, as that of Charles the first; but their impotent attempt to restore Charles the Second failed, and they experienced the rigor of the protector's arm. That popish proselyte, who had readily been prevailed upon to play the hypocrite among the rigid Scots covenanters, had however received so much disgust from them, that he resolved, after the battle of Worcester, to return no more to Scotland, but await his fate and seek concealment in England.

During the protectorate, Scotland enjoyed many and great blessings—the gospel was diligently preached, and the number of the faithful multiplied. The restoration brought back episcopacy and disgust to all the Presbyterian party. During this reign and the succeeding, Scot-

land was a perpetual scene of struggles, discontent and irritation, instead of conciliatory measures. Many of the best men and ministers in the nation were persecuted and driven from their country, by the strong arm of ecclesiastical power, exerted rigorously to impose an establishment, to which the great body of the ministers and people were utterly averse. The bishops sent into Scotland, with Archbishop SHARP at their head, served by their insolence and ill conduct to render the prejudices against episcopacy more inveterate. The peaceful and seraphic Leighton, after doing all the good, and preventing all the evil in his power, ashamed of his associates, and convinced of the improper steps taken to enforce an episcopal government, to which the body of the people was averse, resigned his archbishopric, and retired to a private station. His works will live a monument of evangelical piety; in which the distinguished purity of the style can only be exceeded by the excellence and energy of the sentiment. The brutal Archbishop Sharp, who had rejected every mild and conciliating step suggested by his truly apostolical coadjutor, after having driven him by despair of serving the Church, from his see of Glasgow, fell the victim of his own violences, and died by the hands of assassins; detested even by those who most condemned the bloody deed. The revolution under William the Third, brought back to the Scots their favorite ecclesiastical government and discipline, which hath been continued to the present period.

During all this century the Scots may be considered as a remarkably religious people. And though the life of real godliness can never be supposed universal in any nation, yet the number of evangelical and zealous ministers in the Kirk was great, and their faithful followers

numerous. Remarkable instances of great revivals of religion in various places are also on record. And though their solemn league and covenant, and too many instances of undue heat and intolerance, will never meet approbation from the historian of candor and liberality ; yet, with every thing which can be pointed out as censurable, no Protestant Church, in general, more eminently distinguished itself by purity of doctrine and homeliness of conversation. My limits restrain me from entering into minuter details.

IRELAND.

IT may be a matter of some doubt, whether the kingdom of Ireland can be reckoned among the Protestants or Catholics ; for, though the government was in the hands of the former, the far greater part of the subjects continued in papal superstition and ignorance. Kept under by the strong arm of power, they waited the opportunity of emancipating themselves from this restraint, and restoring the dominancy of the popish religion. The rising discontents under Charles the First, afforded the moment of revolt, and the troops being employed in the fatal contest between the king and the parliament, the Irish rose with savage fury, and massacred seventy thousand Protestants in cold blood. The irresistible arm of Cromwell reduced them to obedience, and punished them for their rebellion.

In the beginning of the century, some blessed laborers cultivated that vineyard. The names of Archbishop Usher, Bishop Babington, Downham and others, will ever be mentioned as the ornaments of that day, and of the Church which their labors edified. Nor, when

the usurper seized the reins of government were the concerns of religion neglected, but a number of faithful and zealous ministers sought to extend the knowledge of the doctrines which are according to godliness amongst them. On the Restoration, the episcopal government was restored with the regal ; but the court of Charles II. produced few such prelates as had blessed the land in the commencement of the century. The same fearful decay among the churchmen was to be observed in Ireland as in England : and the popish bigot, James II. wished to suspend all laws against those of his own faith, and to encourage the progress of his own religion. He found also among them his most strenuous supporters : and when unable in England to raise the least body of partisans openly to resist the authority of William the Third, Ireland invited him to struggle for his abdicated throne ; and the English, under their glorious deliverer, were obliged to fight and conquer that rebellious country. But the true religion continued in a state of great decay—little was done effectually to diffuse the principles of protestantism. The Papists, far the superior number, though under many disabilities, adhered to Rome and her superstitions. Satisfied with all the civil and ecclesiastical emoluments, the nominal Protestants expressed very little zeal for the real conversion of their popish neighbors. In all that is worthy the name of religion Ireland sunk very low ; nor were there scarcely any partial revivals. A death-like stupor seems to have prevailed universally. Between Protestants and Papists a strong line was drawn ; but as to the life of godliness the difference was very little.

HOLLAND

STANDS next among the reformed governments in eminence. Though religious toleration was no where more nobly generous and extensive, the reformed religion was the only one established by the state, and that of far the greater body of the people. About the commencement of this century arose among them a sect, that hath received the name of *Arminians* from its author, a divinity professor of Leyden: whose opinions produced the most unhappy dissensions, not only in the United Provinces, but throughout the Christian world. He had been educated at Geneva in the Calvinistic doctrines, but early in life began to be offended with the decrees as unconditional and absolute; and pleaded for what he judged the more *rational* system of *universal redemption*. What he himself adopted he publicly taught; and as those tenets militated so strongly against the religion of his country, he was soon branded with heretical pravity, and the sound divines of that communion, with Gomarus his colleague at their head, expressed their high disapprobation and censure. The controversy was sharply maintained, and many ecclesiastics of the Dutch Church, and others, adhered to the opinions of Arminius, who died in the midst of these contests: but he left able and resolute defenders, who carried on the war with redoubled vigor: among these were the famous Episcopius, Grotius, and Barneveldt. The Arminians claimed toleration; and a compromise was offered, provided they would renounce the principles of Socinianism, of which they were suspected, and to which it was supposed their tenets led. Repeated conferences,

however, were ineffectual to restore the broken bonds of charity. The Calvinistic divines, fully persuaded that the Arminian principles tended to sap the vitals of Christianity, and to destroy all the most important peculiarities of the religion of God incarnate, urged the magistrates to interpose their authority. Mosheim, though partial to the Arminians, admits that their latitudinarian principles led them to friendship with those whose radical opposition to Christianity was suspected, and whose conduct was very unbecoming the gospel of Christ; and that by this means they confirmed the bad opinion of their designs, which was suggested by their adversaries.

The peculiar sentiments of the Arminians, as contained in the writings of their leader and founder, turned on five points.

1. That salvation was bestowed on the elect, on account of faith and perseverance *foreseen*: and damnation inflicted for unbelief and impenitence, *foreseen* also.

2. That every individual is *equally* redeemed by Christ; though believers and good men only finally receive the benefit.

3. That *true faith* is only from the operation of the Holy Ghost, not from natural powers, or the self-wrought exertion of the human will; but that a general sufficiency of divine grace is given to all.

4. That the *divine grace* or power of the Holy Ghost, begins, and carries to perfection, all that is good in the creature; though the will of the impenitent does resist, and often renders the Spirit's operations ineffectual.

5. That real saints may fall from a state of grace ; but this was at first rather expressed dubiously ; and only afterwards asserted positively.

These are mentioned as the great points of difference from the Calvinistic divines : but it is said, that Episcopius, and the followers of Arminius, departed farther from them, into the Pelagian or Semi-pelagian system ; and many of them certainly inclined to Socinianism. The doctrines stated above, were the avowed pillars of the Arminian creed : but their ideas respecting all *confessions of faith* were very lax ; and they maintained, that as Christians were only responsible to God for their religious opinions, no other confession of faith was necessary, than the admission of the Scriptures to be the word of God.

Political differences in Holland ranged the different parties under opposite leaders. Maurice, Prince of Orange, and those who supported him, were opposed by Barneveldt, Grotius, and Hooggerbeets, men in the highest places of the republic, and jealous of Maurice, as aspiring after undue power and influence. Gomarus and his friends attached themselves to Maurice—the Arminians to Barneveldt and his associates. The party of Maurice prevailing, Barneveldt lost his head, and Grotius and Hooggerbeets were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The Arminians, though not exposed to suffer for their opinions as yet, were thus deprived of their former protectors and supporters, and were probably regarded with an evil eye by Maurice and the prevailing party of the republic, for the intrigues in which they were known to have engaged in support of their patrons.

AN. 1618. A national synod was demanded by the Calvinists, to judge the points in dispute. The States General issued their edicts for its assembling : and deputies from all the provinces of Holland were joined by their brethren, sent from the other eminent reformed churches of England, Switzerland, Hesse, Bremen, and the Palatinate, to decide the matters in controversy. Episcopius, a man of high abilities and eloquence, was the head of the Arminian party, and appeared foremost to defend their opinions against the accusations of Gomarus and his associates : but the synod had hardly commenced its deliberations, before a dispute on the mode of proceeding, drove the Arminian party from the assembly. The Arminians insisted upon beginning with a refutation of the Calvinistic doctrines, especially that of reprobation ; whilst the synod determined, that as the remonstrants were accused of departing from the reformed faith, they ought first to justify themselves by scriptural proof of their opinions.

All means to persuade the Arminians to submit to this procedure having failed, they were banished the synod for their refusal ; and retired with bitter abuse of the partiality with which, as they complained they were treated. The synod, however, proceeded in their examination of the Arminian tenets ; and as the Arminian doctors had left the assembly, their writings underwent a strict scrutiny in their absence : their opinions were condemned, and their persons excommunicated ; whether justly or not, I shall not decide. But nothing can vindicate the rigor and asperity with which they were treated, and the unchristian persecution which followed, and drove these men from their churches and their country, into exile and poverty. Surely such are not the weapons of a Christian's warfare. In the whole of this proceeding, ecclesi-

artificial intolerance was made the instrument of political artifice, to crush the party of their adversaries. Whatever sanctity the one side or the other affected, they both proved themselves to be but men : and if the weak and oppressed were to be pitied, their perverseness, and the provocations they had given, left them equally inexcusable ; as will appear evident to those who weigh impartially all the circumstances on both sides.

The neighboring countries received the exiles with hospitality ; but some of the most illustrious, as Vorstius and others, gave too much cause to their adversaries to justify their suspicions, by verging to the Socinian doctrines ; whilst the differences amongst themselves, were nearly as great as with those from whom they had divided. Hardly any two of the Arminian chiefs explained their sentiments alike ; some expressing in higher terms the doctrines of grace, and others sinking deep into the abyss of Pelagianism and Socinianism.

But the death of Maurice, their persecutor, opened a door for their return, under his less prejudiced successor ; and they were admitted to free toleration and peaceable enjoyment of their opinions. And it is singular enough, that ever since, though the Dutch Church has maintained the profession of the reformed faith, the ministers and people have generally been verging to the Arminian doctrines ; certainly the most congenial with human reasonings and plausible in the misconceived ideas of charity and goodness. And though in Holland the professedly Arminian congregations are by no means numerous, the clergy of the establishment are said generally to rank on the latitudinarian side : whilst from thence the spread of the Arminian tenets, through all the neighboring nations, has been prodigious : the generality in all Protestant countries embrace them, and the far greater number without knowing it.

In their wide extended colonies, however, the established religion was still maintained; and Asia, Africa, and America had received ministers of the reformed confession among them. But the state of spiritual matters was very low in all their settlements; as at home they had abundantly partaken of the general declension, having a name to live, yet being dead: though many and excellent men were found among them in the Church, and with the sectaries from it of various kinds: of these I would just mention the Mennonites, who, after all their persecutions, found rest and quiet at last. Their former turbulence, and their refusing to swear allegiance to any government, rendered them every where suspected, and in many places cruelly treated. But time, and their own exemplary conduct, having opened the eyes of the nations, a greater spirit of candor and tolerance having grown up, and governments becoming sensible of the value of industrious subjects, whatever their faith might be, they were permitted to enjoy a common protection with the other sects, and sit under their vine and their fig-tree, and to be no more afraid. Their divisions among themselves, if not healed, were mitigated. The very rigid followers of Menno were few; the rest, except in the point of baptism, coincided nearly with the reformed. They admitted three orders in their church, *bishops* or *presbyters*, who preside, and have the power of administering baptism and the communion. *Teachers* set apart for preaching and the public worship, and *deacons* or *deaconesses*. All matters pass in a consistory, at which the *bishop* or *presbyter* presides. They and the *teachers* are chosen by suffrage, and set apart by imposition of hands. The English Anabaptists herein considerably differ, as they have only one rank of ministers.

FRANCE.

THE Protestants in France from the time of Henry the Fourth's exaltation to the throne, formed a kind of republic within the monarchy, by the privileges they had obtained ; and the fortified places, as Rochelle, Sedan, and others, which were given them as securities for the uninterrupted enjoyment of their religious liberties. but treaties are feeble cords to bind the strong arms of power : and the violation of faith with heretics is sanctioned by the Catholic's creed. The Protestant leaders were too often ambitious men, and the enemies of the Hugonots always watched for an occasion to deprive them of those privileges which necessity only had extorted ; nor was that occasion long wanting. Cardinal Richeleau, who perceived that his master was but the lord of half his kingdom, whilst the Protestants held Rochelle, and could always call their brethren to their assistance, after hard struggles to subdue their independent spirit, besieged and took their capital ; AN. 1628. which a variety of misfortunes prevented the succors promised by England, from relieving. Lying now wholly at the will of their enemies, whose tender mercies they had so often experienced to be cruel, the Protestants in France sunk very low under every oppression, and every violation of privileges, which they had no longer power to maintain. The insidious cardinal, and the imperious monarch, united with the Jesuits for their extirpation ; too intolerant to permit the Protestant profession under his dominion. Every artifice and promise, joined with threats, and sufferings of various kinds, were first used to engage them to a-

postatize from the faith of their forefathers, which indeed too many did. And on those who were obstinate in adhering to the Protestant religion, vengeance fell, and booted apostles dragooned them into compliance, or delivered them up to the bishops and clergy, who persecuted them with the most inveterate hatred and unrelenting cruelty. Multitudes fled their country, and sought an asylum in foreign lands; and others, unable or unwilling to fly, endured all that malice could devise, and abused power inflict to subdue them to the yoke, to break their spirit, or consume them by suffering.

AN. 1685. The edict of Nantz was now revoked: and that wicked and bigotted Lewis the Fourteenth, instigated by his Jesuits and clergy, merited virtue enough to cancel all his crimes, and procure the high approbation of the Roman see, by the murder and plunder of thousands of his Protestant subjects, and compelling the rest to seek exile as a refuge. To add insult to cruelty, an edict commanded them without delay to return to the bosom of the Church, whilst guards were stationed on the frontiers to prevent the escape of those, who for conscience sake were willing to leave all behind them. Yet hundreds of thousands, by one means or other, found their way into the neighboring nations, where they were received with friendship and affection, as exiles, as persecuted, as brethren. They left their ungrateful country, weakened by such immense emigrations, and carried their industry and resentment to strengthen the hands of her enemies. Even many of the Catholics condemned so gross a violation of the most solemn engagements; and all but the miserable bigots themselves considered the step impolitic, as unjust. It must be confessed the Protestants deserved the scourge,

by the awful declensions evident among them. Some of their principal teachers had departed grievously from the reformed doctrines ; and wished to bend to a nearer state of union with the idolatrous church, which they had renounced : and whilst the body of French Protestants approached the Arminian tenets, and softened down their professions to the more palatable, universal, and comprehending system. Switzerland also adopted them ; and Geneva, the cradle of the reformed churches before the end of the century, degenerated fast into the Arminian and pelagian system : which we have seen naturally ending in our day in Socinianism and Deism.

The spirit of truth and godliness was not likely to flourish under such circumstances. The cause of the Protestants in France was reduced very low : and those who remained, instead of brightening in the furnace of affliction, degenerated from the purity of the faith, as well as the spirituality of practice. The remaining Protestantism was little more than an inveterate hatred of popery. Some gracious ministers remained, but few, and driven into corners ; and though a remnant of the truly faithful was yet to be found, the days of youth were past, and grey hairs were upon them. They have lingered on declining to our days ; whether times of refreshing shall again come to them from the presence of the Lord is in the womb of time, but not out of the prospect of hope.

AN. 1655, 1686, 1696. The poor Waldenses, still maintaining in their sequestered vallies the Protestant doctrine, were hunted out by jesuitical malice, and cruelly treated by their popish duke of Savoy : their utter extinction was threatened. The kind interposition of

the English, Dutch, and Swiss governments preserved a few. Scattered and peeled, reduced in numbers, and destitute of pastors, without some gracious revival, they seemed approaching their final dissolution.

As reduced nearly was the once flourishing Church of the Palatinate. Under a Catholic Elector, and a series of oppressions, it hardly maintained a name among the nations where it had been first in honor. Not were the other reformed communities exempt from the general declension. Hesse and the rest of the Calvinistic churches in Germany, exhibited no specimens of such life and activity as evidenced a vigorous frame : settling like their neighbors into deadness of profession and formality of devotion.

Upon the whole, we may with grief lament the sad decay visible among all the Reformed Churches towards the expiration of the century. Great inroads made on the purity of the faith ; a growing neglect of all holy ordinances ; a grievous departure from the spirituality of a heavenly walk ; and an almost utter extinction of zeal for promoting the salvation of men's souls ; the ministry less evangelical, and the people lukewarm. I may add also a spirit of infidel philosophy arose, that tended to sap the vitals of revealed truth ; whilst the growing immorality and dissipation produced a contempt of all strictness of religious profession, and stood ready to welcome the spreading poison of atheism, in order to remove the uneasy apprehensions of future responsibility. I wish I may be mistaken in my gloomy views of the period I am describing ; and that thousands may have been found left in our Israel unnoticed and unknown, who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

POLAND, TRANSYLVANIA, HUNGARY.

THERE were still vast nations bearing the Christian name, chiefly under governors of the Romish pale; where a great mixture of Protestants and others were to be found, that classed neither with the Lutheran nor reformed. Of these the Socinians were at the beginning of this century a considerable body in Poland and Transylvania: and from thence, as their head quarters, dispatched missionaries to the other parts of Europe; but they proceeded in a line different from the other Protestants; not affecting to lead the multitude by popular discourses, but to gain the great and literati by professing themselves the advocates for the noble powers of reason; calling it the all-sufficient guide to truth; and its uncontrouled exercise the dignity of human nature. Revelation itself before this becomes superfluous; and natural religion fully adequate to every purpose of salvation.

But the hopes entertained from these ingenious missionaries answered not the sanguine expectations of their fellows. A momentary prospect of success at Altorf vanished, and Sohner and his pupils were expelled. Nor did other places furnish a more promising harvest. Even their university at Racow was dissolved and dispersed by the diet of Poland, for an insult offered by some of the wild students to a crucifix; which so roused the wrath of the Catholics, that the Socinians were in consequence banished the kingdom. This edict was executed with the most unchristian severity.

AN. 1658. Dispersed and exiles, they fled into different countries, and after various efforts to obtain an establishment, were viewed by too suspicious an eye to gain any settled resting place. The denial of Christ's divinity was then regarded as a crime so blasphemous, as no Christian state should tolerate : milder maxims have since prevailed : intolerance becomes not the advocates for truth and meekness.

But few communities of Socinians are known out of England, the colluvies of all sects and heresies. Here Biddle had a congregation under Cromwell, and Charles II. Nor hath there been wanting a succession of those who have maintained the leading features of the Socinian heresy, though not exactly agreed respecting the person of the Son of God. But all concur in rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, denying the godhead of Christ, and renouncing all vicarious satisfaction from the sufferings of a Redeemer.

The Arians and Semi-arians were indeed more wise than the grosser but simpler Socinians ; and many having received degrading opinions of Christ, rejected the Athanasian doctrine, and formed to themselves different modifications of deity subordinate. A system which, however much it prevailed, seems more irrational than the Unitarian or Socinian. Can we conceive any intermediate step between the true God and no God ?

The *collegiants* of the United Provinces appear to be a branch of Socinianism, as their wide extended communion admits all who acknowledge the divinity of the Scriptures, and are not grossly immoral. And every man is permitted to speak in their assembly, and even to oppose and argue, provided it be done with gentle-

ness. As they have neither creeds nor consecrated teachers, their bond of union alone is voluntary association.

Madame Schurman, and the famed Bourignon, might be mentioned, ladies whose zeal and learning gave them importance; and their aspiration after perfection flattered spiritual pride and self-righteousness. The leading tenet of the latter, better unfolded by Poiret, a disciple and man of genius, is, that all true christianity consists "in immediate communion with the Deity, by internal feeling and impulse;" approaching very nearly, in its genius to the doctrine of Quakerism, and alike sprung from the same mystic stock: of which also among ourselves was the noted Joanna Lead, whose visions and predictions in that day collected a number of absurd and credulous disciples. Folly and credulity will never cease in every age to afford abundant converts to fanaticism, and to whatever comes with the stamp of extraordinary.

CENTURY XVIII.

CHAP. I.

GENERAL PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH EXTERNALLY.

AS we approach nearer our own times, the more difficult it will be found to speak with impartiality. Far from being able to assure my readers of my own, I confess the greatest suspicion of myself, knowing the deceitfulness of the heart, and the amazing difficulty to divest ourselves, whether of the prejudices of education, or the pride of having emancipated ourselves from them ; not perceiving that we have only adopted a new prejudice for an old one. All thererore I can say, is, that I wish to know the truth, and to represent it without disguise ; and I shall feel no shame in acknowledging involuntary error ; be thankful for information ; ready to receive rebuke ; and more willing to correct my mistakes, than any kind friend or undeserved enemy may be to point them out. I am only sorry, that I am not more completely and fully furnished for the task ; but I shall endeavor to do my best, and hope for candor. In many particulars I shall speak what I do know, and testify what I have seen, for more than half the century.

As the western Christian world was now divided into two great communions, those who adhered to the Church of Rome, and those who acquired the name of Protestants, by their departure from it, these will de-

mand our consideration separately and distinctly. The one forming a body of vast and extended members under a visible head, resident in the ancient metropolis of the Roman empire, which her arts and politics continued to maintain, if not over the persons, yet more despotically over the souls of men. The other a body vast and extended also, but in numbers apparently inferior, and neither connected by members as homogeneous, nor under a visible chief. Yet solidity united in some *fundamental principles*, which formed a powerful, though invisible bond of attraction, amidst all apparent differences of opinion, kept them in a state of determined aversion to popery; and placed them in a constant sphere of repulsion from any approach to this greater body. The tyranny of Rome, the idolatry and superstitions too glaring ever to be softened down into any point of contact, made the rent between them forever irreparable, without some prodigious change in the sentiments and views of one or the other. In some particulars the balance vibrated unequally. In point of learning, as deep scholars, profound mathematicians, and acute metaphysicians, as well as every other branch of literature, the perfect freedom allowed to enquiry of every kind, and the general thirst for knowledge, as well as its diffusion through all Protestant countries, gave them vastly the preponderance in the scale. Not but that singular advances were made in the same studies in the Catholic countries; and philosophy cultivated with the greatest ardor; but it was confined to a particular number of literati, not so generally diffused, and shackled by the dogmas of popery. It is amazing how much the reading the Scriptures in the mother tongue of every Protestant nation, and the freedom of discussion of every

subject, have led all ranks of men to a very great proportionable superiority over Papists in this respect. And what is more to be attended to the first scholars, deepest in the philosophic school, among the Romanists, though they continued professionally to adhere to the religion of their country, yet sat very loose to any religion at all ; doubted of every thing but mathematical demonstration ; and therefore eyed the mysteries of the Church to which they belonged with silent contempt, and sometimes ventured a sarcastic sneer, which manifested a very feeble faith in the established doctrines and practices.

On the other hand, though the purity of morals had suffered an equal declension in the different churches, in point of zeal for the propagation of their own opinions, a decided inclination of the balance was still on the side of popery. Not only the inveteracy of ancient habits, gave a strong impulse to all the monastic orders, who must live on the emoluments of superstition ; but the society of Jesuits instituted on purpose to support the sinking cause of Rome, particularly exerted themselves. They, indeed, displayed an unwearied activity, in any another cause, nobly exemplary. They stimulated the torpid zeal of Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins ; roused them for the conflict, and called them to share in the merit and glory of bringing back the heretical deserters to the fold again ; or of enlarging the bounds of popish dominion in heathen and distant lands. Whereas, the love of Protestants was become lukewarm, nay, frozen up. Secure in their own enjoyments they sat down in the pursuit of science, commerce, or gain ; and too unconcerned about their own souls, entertained very little anxiety about the souls of others. The ministers of the different communions watched o-

ver their own flocks, indeed, that no wolf might steal into the fold ; but they too frequently slumbered and slept ; and appeared more occupied about their temporal advantages, than the spiritual benefit of those entrusted to their care. Few had zeal to attempt conversions from popery, or to labor extensively. Besides, in the Protestant churches, little, or no provision being made for the particular purpose of extending the pale of evangelical truth, the Papists had an unspeakable advantage. They maintained a host of missionaries in every Protestant country, for making converts to Rome : always secretly at work, often openly, men of the most insinuating manners, trained up for this very object, in the wiles of controversy, to undermine the true faith, to place the popish opinions in the most favorable light, and to surprize the consciences of the ill-informed, the scrupulous, and the disturbed.

It may be added, farther, that the great weight of interest lay on the popish side. A thousand allurements and advantages were held out by zealous papists, in order to make converts, even to the lowest of their tenants and people around them, such as every Protestant would have thought it a disgrace to employ ; restrained by his principles from using other motives than argument and conviction on scriptural grounds. Nor did the idea of any meritorious service stimulate *his* efforts, whilst every Papist gained a proportionate offset for all his own offences, and a fund of merit against the day of judgment, by every convert he could produce to popery, whatever were the means of conversion. Hence, not only in all the countries under popish governors, was every effort used with peculiar advantage to extend the dominion of Rome over the consciences of men ; but in the Protestant kingdoms continual inroads were made,

and converts gained. Indeed it is surprising, considering all circumstances, that their numbers have been so few and the success so inadequate to the craft and diligence which have been employed by these emissaries.

CHAP. II.

ON THE ROMISH CHURCH.

THE commencement of this century beheld the Church of Rome apparently fixed upon an immoveable basis in Europe, stretching out her arms to the new world, and embracing both the Indies. By the strenuous efforts of her jesuitical physicians, her deadly wound appeared to be healed, and florid health restored to her countenance. But it was only the flush in the cheek of the hectic ; the matter was secretly collecting in the vitals, and all the fearful consumptive symptoms, which we now witness, were preparing ; and this from a source little apprehended ; from men of no weight in any state, living chiefly by their pens, and supporting themselves by the diffusion of writings, pregnant with the virus of infidel philosophy. To appearance the state of popery seemed most auspicious : the Catholic interest rising high in the barometer of politics, and the Catholic religion spreading openly, or secretly, through all the corners of the earth ; but a deadly worm preyed on the flourishing gourd, which overshadowed the papal throne.

Rome, the centre of Italy, looked round with exultation upon all the countries, from the Alps to Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and other isles of the Mediterranean and Adriatic sea ; and not a soul dared peep, or a tongue mutter heretical pravity. The inquisition

and the priests had effectually laid the ax to the root of the tree, and left not a trace of protestantism remaining.

Spain and Portugal had exerted equal vigor, and Jesuits and Inquisitors ferreted out every lurking hole of heresy. Even the poor Jews were compelled to cross themselves, and with the more concentrated venom shut up in their hearts, to cover it with a greater zeal for superstition, and the ceremonies of the Church.

France, aspiring to universal monarchy, and menacing the nations around with servitude, had begun effectually at home, by the most flagitious acts of despotic violence towards the Protestant heretics. The popish clergy and dragoons supplied the place of inquisitors. Not a congregation remained of all the flourishing churches which once spread over the bosom of that vast country. Their worship interdicted, their marriages declared illegal, and oppression in every shape and form, weighing them into the dust of death. Though their numbers, especially in the South of France, were great, they were compelled to hide all profession of their religion. It was death for a Protestant minister to exercise his functions, and imprisonment and confiscation, at least, for those who attended or concealed him. The despotic Lewis the Fourteenth, with his jesuit confessor and their crew, plotted night and day the utter extinction of the Protestant name; and indeed had nearly effected it: and what is to be lamented, these sufferings of the Protestants, though they increased their abhorrence of popery, produced no spiritual change for the better, but for the worse. The peculiar doctrines of the reformed, had unhappily been debased from primitive purity, by an admixture of the Arminian leaven; and the conduct of the Protestants in France displayed no such traits

of spirituality, as manifested any striking improvement in moral excellence, or Christian graces. Their souls lost the vigor of religion, as their persons became more enslaved by despotism. The amazing increase of popery in France is incalculable ; from a third of the kingdom which had been enlightened, there were few men left, and those driven to holes and hiding places : for when the suppression of all public worship is long continued ; every means used to harass and oppress on the one hand, and to seduce and allure on the other ; despair of help from without, and consciousness of inability to resist within, what can longer support the falling cause ? humanly speaking, it must sink under the burden.

The sovereigns of the House of Austria, as bigotted as ever, seconded with their weight every wile of ecclesiastical and jesuitical missionaries : through all the extent of their dominions, they persecuted the profession of Protestantism ; and endeavored to extinguish every latent spark. Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, the Low Countries, and all their other fiefs or dependencies, scarcely permitted a Protestant to breathe the vital air.

The other countries of popery, among which the Palatinate, once so famous for Protestantism, was now reckoned, used the same arts and oppressions ; and often no help remained for the poor people, but to forsake the ungrateful land of their nativity, and seek an asylum among strangers : and even to transport themselves into the new world, in order to escape the malice of their persecutors.

And the countries where Papists and Protestants were still mixed, and the same despotic proceedings were sus-

pended by constitutional laws, treaties, or more commonly by political considerations, least their neighbors should interfere and support the oppressed : still the weight of power, and the wiles of jesuitism and monkery, bore hard upon the consciences of men, and produced very many lamentable effects in the perversion of many from the faith. Thus Poland, Hungary, Transylvania, suffered, and other countries in similar situations ; and many converts to popery are said to have enlarged the Romish pale. Nor in the Protestant countries themselves was this unobservable : and some sounded the alarm, though few lifted up the standard to resist the inroads of the enemy.

BRITAIN, now risen to the first among the nations, held still in her bosom too many popish recusants, and enemies to the Protestant faith. In some of her dominions, the Catholics exceeded the Protestants, four or five to one, as in Ireland. Numerous bodies remained in Scotland and England, which, though kept down by laws, too severe in many particulars, the lenity of the government scarcely ever put into execution, and connived at their transgression. Hence their worship, though forbidden, was maintained, it can hardly be said, secretly, as their houses of meeting were as well known as those of other dissenters ; and the tolerating spirit universally diffused, not only protected them from insult, but embraced them with all the civilities of intercourse, and winked at the seductions which now and then appeared, through the secret machinations of their priests and emissaries. It must be acknowledged, that the balance was kept pretty nearly even, not so much by any conversions wrought through Protestant efforts, as by interested motives ; when the nobles, to possess an hereditary seat in parliament ; or the politic and ambi-

tious to enter the House of Commons, or the magistracy, from which, by the profession of popery they were excluded, renounced one religion to embrace the other; without being a whit, more Protestants afterwards, than they were Papists before. And as infidelity had made so great a progress in all lands, it was not at all to be wondered, that men of no principle embraced that profession of religion, which most corresponded with their avarice or ambition. To these chiefly in protestant countries were the conversions from popery to be traced.

The case was much the same in Holland and Switzerland. The northern Protestants were either less annoyed with the horde of Jesuits, or more tenacious to suppress a religion which they feared and hated.

Yet the progress of popery in Europe, though great, bore a small proportion to the spread of it in distant lands. From Canada to Louisiana, the French had erected an empire which threatened the British colonies; and their numerous emissaries among the Indian tribes, had brought many of them to the name of Christian, and to baptism; and, in order to make them surer tools for their grand monarch, had enlisted them under the banners of Rome.

But the vast foreign empires were those of Portugal and Spain, especially the latter, comprehending the whole continent of America on the Pacific Ocean, from north to south; at least from California to the extremities of Chili; and on the other side, all the immense regions that lie round the bay of Mexico, with the vast and numerous islands, besides the unknown boundless regions to the south.

The Brazils, with their dependencies, Portugal occupied : both nations were the obsequious votaries of Rome. With inquisitorial watchfulness, hosts of Jesuits and friars of every rank and color, (this being the paradise of monkery) took care that not a spark of Protestant pravity should ever enter their dominions ; determined to maintain inviolate the devotion and profligacy, the ignorance and purity of the Catholic faith, which distinguished these favored lands. The vast Philippine Islands enjoyed the same advantages ; and every where, negroes or Indians, slaves or free men, increased the number of Romish subjects.

China was now filled with missionaries and converts, and threatened almost to become Christian ; and in the East Indies, especially on the coasts of Malabar, and even to the gulf of Ormus, the zealous missionaries erected their cross, and enlisted a numerous host under their banners. Africa afforded gold and ivory, and slaves, and converts. The coasts of Mozambique, and those westward, washed by the waves of the Atlantic, heard and received the disciples of Loyola. Indeed, they had strong inducements to quicken their diligence and extend their empire : for, besides the inestimable benefits of popery conferred upon these various colors of mankind, they contrived to make it answer to their own order, and to secure to themselves commercial advantages, from which one of their first objects was to exclude all their monkish rivals ; and to be the princes as well as priests of those whom they had won to the profession of the popish faith.

I am obliged to cast only a rapid glance on these conquests that encircle the terrestrial globe ; in all which, at the beginning of this century, popery had e-

rected her dominion ; and that principally by the means of her jesuit missionaries. Whoever considers this extension of empire, will be ready to cry out, as it is written, " what city is like unto this great city" ! and how natural was the elation of her pride, that said, " I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." but her day was coming, and to every true Protestant it must be matter of exultation to trace the steps of her fall, and to see the image of jealousy smitten, by the stone hewn out of the mountain without hands. " Sing ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it : rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

Amidst all the apparent greatness and glory of Rome, various secret causes were working her dissolution.

The kings of the earth, though they gave their power to the beast, for purposes of their own ambition, yet in a variety of contests had learned the contemptibility of papal anathemas ; and this peculiar benefit the Reformation had generally produced, that the popish monarchs themselves had been less submissive, and more decisive, that in these several kingdoms, all interference with their governments became not the spiritual father ; and therefore, whilst they continued to kiss the feet of the pontiff himself, and profess the most devoted reverence for his person, they made no scruple to despise the mandates issued by him, making a difference between the Pope and the papal see.

The humiliating submissions of Rome, to the insolent monarch of France we have seen. Naples, Sardinia, Portugal, Spain, all in their turns, wherever their regalities, privileges, and immunities, were trenched upon,

clipped the wings of the dragon, and left him only the shadow of that power, which, before the Reformation, had been exercised without controul. Every dispute demonstrated the increasing feebleness of the papal arm, when opinion no longer supported the terror of his anathemas.

The inquisition in Spain and Portugal, became a state engine directed by government, and not an independent court controuled by foreign emissaries.

The sharp disputes which reigned between the members of the Church, Jesuits and Dominicans, Jesuits and Jansenists, contributed greatly, by the writings on both sides, to open men's eyes, and to lead them to the exercise of their own understandings in the matters disputed; especially, they tended to bring into discredit, that body, of all others the most dangerous, because most servile to the Romish pontiffs. The jealousy of the monkish tribes, and all their weight and influence at Rome, backed the bitter accusations against the Jesuits, respecting their foreign missions. China, by these disputes, became subject to different decisions: sometimes the Pontiff's mandates were obeyed, sometimes the Jesuits resisted. The issue was the expulsion of all the missionaries, and the vanishing of all their churches, as the meteor of the night.

Their bitter persecution of the Jansenists awakened a return of enmity. Though their power prevailed at Rome, and with a bigot king, yet many who were disgusted with the bulls issued, looked to a future council, unable to procure present redress. Thus was there roused up a spirit of resentment against these jesuitical

persecutors, that only waited the moment of vengeance.
AN. 1713.

The famous book of Quesnel, which produced the bull "UNIGENITUS," so called from the word with which it begins, deserves a moment's attention, as probably to this eventually the fall of this society may be traced. Into this book were elegantly introduced the principles for which Jansenius had been already condemned: and the style was so pleasing, and the annotations on the New Testament so spiritual and animated, that it was read with the greatest delight. It had reached Rome; and Renaudot, a French *Abbé*, going, on a visit to the Pope, found him reading the new publication. "This," says he to the *Abbé*, "is an excellent book. We have nobody at Rome capable of writing in this manner. I wish I could engage the author to reside here." The eagle eyes of the Jesuits had seen through the design of Quesnel, to give weight and consequence to their Jansenist enemies, whom they wished to crush. Their cries therefore of heresy surrounded the Pontiff; and though the book was so excellent before, they insisted on his reading it again with jesuit spectacles, and extracting from it, and condemning one hundred and one propositions as heretical, or of heretical tendency. This bull set the kingdom of France in a flame. A vast multitude had read and approved father Quesnel: cardinals, bishops, and clergy innumerable, perceived in the work singular unction; and not viewing it through the same glasses, could discover nothing like heretical pravity in it. The Protestants, by this bull were convinced no abuse at Rome would ever be corrected; and the moderate Papists, who were not Jansenists, were highly offended to see those doctrines of predestination and grace, so peremptorily condemned as heresy, which the

Fathers, St. Augustin, and the Church, had been supposed to hold as orthodox.

The dispute was long and sharp in France. The Jesuits carried the day. It became the law of the land. You must subscribe the bull *unigenitus*, or have no sacraments. Oppressions, banishments, excommunications followed. The opposition made, and sometimes the means employed were, it must be confessed, highly discreditable to the Jansenist cause. They had better tempered weapons to defend themselves, than visions and miracles at the tomb of the *Abbé Paris*. These indeed they also wielded, and with effect. They laid open the moral system of the Jesuits, and stamped it with deserved infamy. They awakened the attention of the popish powers to their political conduct and designs. They charged them with erecting in Paraguay, an independent sovereignty; and under pretence of preserving their converts from contaminating examples of Portuguese and Spaniards, of having excluded them from entering their missions. The mercantile transactions of this wily body excited the jealousy of the commercial world. Under the cloak of piety and conversions they endeavored to monopolize the trade of the country, which they had reduced to their obedience. The gain of the merchant, as well as the authority of the monarch, thus trenching upon, raised an host of irritated and powerful opponents. Suspicious connections with those who attempted to assassinate the King of Portugal; and open resistance to the Spanish and Portuguese forces on fixing the limits of their several settlements in South America, issued in their complete destruction. By a sudden and unexpected stroke, without consulting Rome, the Catholic princes conspired their ruin; and they were all seized and banished in

the same moment from Spain, Portugal, and France ; brought home by shiploads from all the foreign dominions of these powers ; and packed off for Rome their protectrice ; but now unable longer to defend her jesuitical satellites. After a while the concurrent demands of the popish monarchs compelled the reluctant pontiff Ganginelli, to dissolve the society, lest jesuitical malice and revenge might issue in some destructive enterprise, unless crushed never to rise up again. AN. 1773.

With them the glory of Rome departed. The great barrier was broken down which held the consciences of men enslaved to the Roman see ; and freer scope was given to the infidel philosophy to lift up its head with confidence, when it had these argules no longer watching the approaches to heresy.

Of all the causes which have contributed to the humiliation of Rome, none so effectually operated as the prevailing tenets of infidelity ; which diffused themselves among all the literati, and most distinguished geniuses of the Romish Church. The progress was silent but wide. The famous, or infamous Rousseau, D'Alembert, Helvetius, and that most agreeable, but seductive and unprincipled writer, Voltaire, contributed to charge the mine and lay the train, which could not fail, with the first match kindled, to explode and overturn not only all the trumpery of popery, but to raise a spirit equally inimical to all despotic governments ; nay, threatening an universal revolution in society, by the changes it was suited to produce both in religion and politics. Lord Chesterfield, a pupil of this school, when in France long ago, foresaw the inevitable consequences which we have witnessed. And what is singular enough, the wide spreadings of Arminianism, which infected the Protest-

ant countries, have begun even in them to give way to the more philosophical doctrine of *necessity*, leading to fatalism, and ending in atheism. None gave greater weight to these opinions than Frederic the Great of Prussia, the patron and high priest of infidelity: he contributed to spread it by his own writings and example, and to protect it by every encouragement. Though France was the fruitful source, Berlin was the focus where the scattered rays were collected, and where they beamed with peculiar lustre. The superior orders of the Romish Clergy themselves having drank into this philosophical spirit, made en- vigorous efforts to suppress its progress, and little apprehended the fatal consequences to themselves, to which it was imperceptibly leading. The life of dissipation which prevailed also, in so fearful a manner, destructive of every precept of the gospel, prepared willing disciples for infidel principles. It was abundantly easier, and it must be confessed much more rational, to suppose that there was nothing after death, and so to quiet every uneasy apprehension, than to receive the absurdities of purgatory, and be at the pains of penance, or submit to the purchase of indulgences.

Moreover, the increase of knowledge in general guarded men from the pious frauds which had been such powerful engines of sacerdotal delusion. The priests themselves began to blush at their own tricks; and all the men of intelligence would cordially have wished to get rid of them; but they feared the people, whose credulity required imposition. So they wisely, in their ideas, tolerated the prevailing superstitions, to avoid what they regarded as the greater evil, the acknowledging papal fallibility, the loosening the pontifical dominion, and emboldening the prying eye of curiosity to look into its abuses.

Owing to these and a variety of other causes, the papal throne sunk in its revenues, as in its authority—little flowed into its coffers. One kingdom after another stopped the fatal drain, which had poured from every land into that gulph the wealth of nations, to be dissipated by nepotism, or a bastard progeny.

But above all other causes of the humiliation of papal dominion, the most menacing and destructive have arisen from the ambitious rulers of France, who, under pretext of liberty, having seized the government, erected a tyranny more bloody and oppressive than that against which they revolted. After murdering their sovereign, plundering and degrading the nobles, levelling every distinction of rank, overturning every ancient establishment at home, abolishing the convents, shutting up the churches, banishing or murdering, with the most inhuman cruelty, all the ecclesiastics who refused to bow to their dictates, they burst as a torrent on the neighboring nations, every where desolating the Romish Church; and sweeping away its trumpery: melting down the silver saints and their shrines; casting the bells into cannon, and converting the churches and convents into barracks or workshops. Thus suddenly all the immense wealth of the clergy dissolved as snow before the sunbeams. The whole ecclesiastical property seized, sold, and dissipated; religion was left to take care of itself. The bigotted country of the Netherlands has shared the same fate with Savoy, the sad scene of former bloody persecutions; and still the gigantic ogre of revolution stalked on over prostrate and trembling nations around, and all Christendom stood aghast whereunto this would grow. Germany dismembered, Switzerland subjugated, and all Italy plundered, from Milan to Naples, and crumbled into pieces, under the fleeting name of Re-

publics, and after the model and under the controul of their harsh step-mother : Kings hurled from their thrones, the Pope himself a prisoner, and Rome reduced to be an inconsiderable appendage and subject to the vaunted Great Nation ; whilst Spain trembling submits to become little better than a dependent province, and Portugal attempted to purchase a temporary respite, dreading to be swallowed up by the monster. Amidst these convulsions, expectation stretched out her neck, as if listening for the angel's voice, when he should cry, " Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen ;" for it appeared highly probable that the time was come for the fulfilment of the prophetic word, " And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." A sudden reverse, in which nationally we cannot but rejoice, seems in its consequences for a moment to suspend the threatened destruction of popery. Whether the carved work which hath been broken down with these axes and hammers can be repaired, and the foundations which have been undermined, be propped up a little longer, only the spirit of prophecy can foretell. Every true Protestant cannot but wish that God would hasten the period when the popish power shall fall never to rise up again, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.

Meantime it may not be unprofitable to pass in review the several popish countries, and the state of religion in each of them.

CHAP. III.

ITALY.

ITALY, the chief region of papal empire, has been justly branded by one of our noble authors, as the seat of "*illiberal vices*," which walk by the side of superstition in the open front of day, and refuse to be ashamed.

Italy comprises,

I. NAPLES AND ITS DEPENDENCIES.

These, long held as fiefs of Rome, after undergoing a variety of changes, rested under a branch of the Bourbon Spanish family, and for some time have enjoyed independence. Many disputes with Rome, were in general carried against the pontiffs, from whom at last they have emancipated themselves entirely, and pay no longer the former mark of feudal homage. In these countries not a spark of evangelical truth remains. They are sunk into the lowest dregs of popery. For some time past indeed they have begun to be initiated into the mysteries of modern philosophy, and dared to disbelieve. Many of the superior ranks of life, the nobles, the military, the literati, and the ecclesiastics, were nearly, if we believe Brydone's Travels, as infidel as himself.

A *ridiculous scene*, which a friend of mine witnessed, as he was visiting one of the beautiful churches of Na-

ples, will give a pretty strong specimen of their religion. A woman opened a closet and took out an image of the Virgin, after stripping off her old cloaths she put on her a silk sacque, a hoop-peticoat, and very fine faced double ruffles. Presently several friars entered the church, and producing their books united in supplications around her. They rose from their knees, tapped their snuff boxes, and talked and laughed together, whilst the woman unrobed the lady, and restored her to her former place, and her old cloaths again. A Protestant could not behold such worship without mingled pity and derision. In order to be fully ascertained respecting *indulgences*, he went to the office, and for two zequins he purchased a plenary remission of all sins, for himself, and any two other persons of his friends or relations, whose names he was empowered to insert, and who might be in need of so convenient a certificate for the porter of Paradise, St. Peter. That in the end of the enlightened eighteenth century, such folly can be propagated, is, to us who live far from the scenes of superstition, surprising; but countenanced there by priestcraft, general habit and education, the breath of suspicion dare not impeach the power of ghostly absolution: and shocking to relate, the first ecclesiastic of the kingdom was compelled to work annually the miraculous liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, or the populace would fancy some fatal calamity threatened the state. What the manners of such a country must be, are easily supposable. Thither persons of our own retire, who, looked upon with horror for their unnatural crimes, need there no cover for their abominations, and are equally well received in all company.

II. ROME AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL STATE.

The states immediately under the Romish temporal dominion, still vast and fertile, were governed and plundered by ecclesiastics, who held all the first places of power and profit. The beautiful compagna of Rome, indeed, once so abundant, is now become an unhealthy morass, where even to sleep a single night is dangerous: and the spectres, which necessity compels to abide there, seem all walking in their shrouds to the tomb. What the state of popery must be under these immediately called to countenance every fraud of superstition is evident. Yet at Rome itself greater liberty was allowed than either in Spain or Portugal; and even the jews had an allotted quarter, where they lived protected by the government. I will not say that there was more need of courtezans at Rome than elsewhere, because of the thousands of dignified celibataries, cardinal, bishops, and others; but since they must be tolerated, the ghostly father prudently drew a revenue from prostitution, and, licensed the stews. Perhaps in no Catholic country had infidelity made a greater progress than at Rome itself; but since by this craft they had their gain, it would have been the height of imprudence to rend the vail, for the populace to look into the sanctuary; and therefore, they wisely continued the tawdry mask of superstition over the face of impiety; and none bowed more lowly to the image, or performed their devotions with greater decency and propriety than those who laughed at their own absurdities. But though truth was thus fallen in the streets, and equity could not enter; the army of bootied missionaries effected for a while the conversion of the people from superstitions, which gallic warriors had learned to despise; and when such edifying examples were before the vulgar, and the same arms

would raise them to equality with the proudest, the invitation was too tempting not to be acceded to, and the happy fraternization promised to be cordially embraced through all the countries of Italy. Naples was last drawn into the vortex. The strong hand of power suppressed for a while the revolutionary movements which had manifested themselves, and only waited for the auspicious moment, when they might be displayed with effect: at last it came, and the monarch fled. The kingdom ravaged, plundered, exhausted, and but just recovered by a change as sudden as the revolution which had preceded, will not improbably be replunged into the same profligacy and superstition as before, and the blood of St. Januarius liquefy again in the warm hand of the archbishop.

III. THE UPPER REGIONS OF ITALY.

These first felt the ravages of Gallic arms. Milan, Venice, Piedmont, Genoa, Tuscany, fell successively before them. The Church and its revenues afforded the richest plunder, and ecclesiastical magnificence faded before these disciples of the new philosophy, the Goths and Vandals of the eighteenth century. For a considerable time before their irruption, the church indeed, almost throughout all the Italian states had become an engine of politics; for though they professed obedience to the Roman Pontiff, only so much respect was paid to his mandates, as consisted with their own sovereignty and interests. This was well-known at Rome, and therefore, the popes had for a great while used only intrigue, to carry the points which they had no longer power to enforce. The thunders of excommunication had of late slept in the Vatican; and the menaces of authority given place to paternal admonition. But

impotence once discovered provokes insult : and *that* in many instances the popes had been compelled to wink at, and watch for a happier moment to recover their former authority. They had parted with none of their claims, nor descended from their high supremacy over all persons ecclesiastical and civil, but having lost the power of executing their anathemas, and the pillars of their throne being no longer upheld by blind veneration, every asinine head was insolently lifted up against the sick lion.

What will be the new order of things, and whither the rapid changes succeeding each other will lead, time must discover. The revenues of the Church seem to have received an irrecoverable shock ; and power and dignity are faded when not supported by wealth and opinion. The spread of infidelity and atheism is visible, the glimmering of gospel truth no where apparent. It was said at Milan, a Protestant Church was opened ; but the Protestants of such an army must be a spurious race, and can hardly leave any trace of truth behind them. War is always the parent of wickedness.— Those who have been taught to despise the frauds of popery and its fopperies, even when they return to its profession, will be but half papists. The bands of veneration for superiors have been loosed on one side, and the dread of what is past will put a bridle on the more glaring abuses of authority for the future. Though a new pope should therefore be again enthroned and restored to his capital, the day of papal dominion seems to be past, and he would only shine as the sun shorn of his beams. It is not a day that gives hope of replenishing the coffers of ecclesiastics ; and all false piety is sunk to so low an ebb, that monasteries will hardly ever more be founded, or scarcely repaired. The drones of

the hive are driven out, and many of them killed by the winter's cold. It will not be easy to re-people the deserted cells—the rising generation have learned another lesson ; and Protestantism is not more inimical to monkery than infidelity.

Hence during the whole of this century no attempts have been made to pour forth new orders of monks upon the world. On the contrary, interest and politics have led to the suppression of monasteries in all the various nations of popery. The life itself has lost all the foolish veneration once attached to it : these cells of celibataries have been for a long while filled with the daughters of those, who could make but a slender provision for them, the younger sons of numerous families, or of the peasants, who were ambitious of having an ecclesiastic among their relations.

The greatest preferments have long since ceased to be the meed of distinguished merit of any kind. They have followed the politics of courts ; served the purposes of the prime ministers ; or been bestowed on the relations of favorites, and those who could make interest with such as had the disposal of them. Hence less of the spirit of the order hath stimulated the sacerdotal tribe ; and throughout Italy a multitude of men hath arisen high in science, and all attainments of human literature, such as Boscovitch, Beccaria, and others, who have perhaps unintentionally rent the veil of ignorance, the covering cast over all that people, and let in such a beam of day as hath tended to produce more accurate investigation, and consequently to detect the false principles, which custom had established, and thus radically to sap the veneration for opinions sanctified by long prescription. The ravages which have lately suc-

ceeded, and the partizans to democracy which have been gained, cannot but add weight to the descending scale. Rome may be rescued from its plunderers and another pontiff enthroned, but the spirit which they have diffused; and the opinions they have disseminated, will not be so easily eradicated; and will probably prepare for farther changes. Happy! if truth and righteousness at last shall lift up their banners at Rome; and that gospel which Paul preached, and his beautiful epistle contains, be again the language of her ministers, and the faith of her people.

SPAIN.

BEYOND the mountains, the papal power seemed even more inveterately established, than in the nearer subjects to the metropolis. During the reign of jesuitism, Spain and Portugal exhibited countries of servile obedience, and bigotted superstition; and they are still the last in the train of science, as well as truth. The disputes, indeed, about privileges and immunities, were terminated in their favor; but to need a dispute about national rights, which they should have admitted no foreign power to contest with them, bespoke the state of subjection in which they had been held. No appearance of evangelical doctrine hath hitherto in these lands dared to lift up its head. The inquisition, though lately palsied in its operations, was still ready to receive every denunciation, and suppress the first movements of heresy. The wiser and best informed, lamented the dreadful injury done to the kingdom of Spain, by expelling the most useful and industrious of its subjects. Olivedo, and other patriotic ministers, endeavored to revive the torpid state of agriculture, by inviting

some German Protestants, with the promise of protection, to cultivate the desert lands of Sierra Morena; but this scheme was utterly frustrated, and himself brought before the inquisitors for heresy. A late intelligent traveller, who resided some time in Spain, and had the fullest opportunity to acquaint himself with the state of religion, and the manners of its inhabitants, assured me, that Spain appeared a hundred years in ignorance behind the other nations of Europe; but in dissipation far exceeded them. The cavaliere servente, now more agreeably occupies the place of the duenna. It would be a disgrace for a wife to be seen with her husband in public: even in his own house, he never presumes to intrude into the lady's apartment, when her cavaliere attends her toilette; indeed, he is himself employed in discharging that office with some other married female, without reproach, and without recrimination. Yet the offices of piety are performed with wondrous regularity. At mass the cavaliere servente attends his innamorata as a part of his duty; and a system is established, of impurity and religion, of devotion and profligacy, of which, bad as we are, we have no parallel. Such a country, half overrun with French armies, and submitting, by an inglorious peace, to become the satellite of the new republic, cannot but be inoculated with their principles. The very state of their court, the manner in which the Duke of Alcudia, now the Prince of Peace, once a lifeguard-man, lives with the Queen; the imbecillity of the King, and the despotic power of the favorite, all suggest the probability of changes, which even the rooted bigotry of the country will be unable to resist. It is said, very lately, that the inquisition is shut up, after having for a considerable while ceased to entertain the people with the pious spectacles of the *auto-de-fe*, or the solemn burning of those

convicted of heretical pravity : and that now it is forbidden to proceed on any farther process. It had been for some time before under the check and controul of government. The old woman at Rome can no longer cover her babes of blood with her mantle of superstition. Her inquisitors are suppressed. Yet little knowledge or godliness have made their appearance. The new philosophy, as in other countries, has infected the literati ; and all who are sent by the government to travel for improvement, are sure to carry home with them a more than proportional share of infidelity, together with the knowledge and arts which they have acquired ; and thus every day the foundations will probably be laid for the same changes as have marked her terrible neighbor.

PORTUGAL.

PORTUGAL, defended by our heretical arm, from the easy conquest it held out to her more potent neighbor, continued in the same state of mental and political languor and imbecillity. Having contributed as much as any court to the expulsion of the Jesuits, and the extinction of their order, she has not yet risen above her long rooted prejudices, and subjection to sacerdotal imposition. I am assured, that it is astonishing to see with what rooted aversion and abhorrence they behold us as heretics, though their defenders, and standing in the gap to prevent their being swallowed up by the Spaniards, their enemies. As a *State*, their feebleness is ready to leave them as a prey to the first invader. As a *Church*, no place affords a more dreary solitude than Portugal : nor have I heard, or read of any effort made, for ages past, to introduce a ray of evangelical

truth among them. The Scriptures are a book sealed, hid, and interdicted; gloomy superstition spreads her wings; ignorance, idolatry, profligacy, and cruelty, brood beneath them: not a reforming spirit dares murmur a doubt of the absurdest dogmas, or a suggestion to redress the most glaring sacerdotal abuses. Probably Portugal and her dependencies will be last among the nations reclaimed from ignorance, and emancipated from the servitude of popery.

FRANCE.

Comparatively, FRANCE has long been but half the subject of Rome: always contending for her gallican liberties, though jesuitical influence obtained great sacrifices: yet such was the discontent, and such the decisions of the clergy in this kingdom, that some occasion of fresh provocation only was wanting to have withdrawn them long since wholly from the Romish yoke. Nothing could speak this language stronger than the proposal made by the famous DUPIN, with other doctors of the Sorbonne, to our Archbishop AN. 1720. Wake, for the union of the churches; and though the matter proceeded not to any formal treaty, yet the preliminaries which were mentioned by the gallic clergy, as matters concedable, shew that the project was disappointed more by court intrigues, and the fear of the prime minister, that wretch DUBOIS, losing his cardinal's hat, than from any aversion which the Gallican Church Rulers seem to have had to set up for themselves.

Whether policy or candor contributed to the change, after the death of Louis the Fourteenth, the Protestants

met with milder treatment in France ; their meetings were connived at by the government ; and where a malignant bishop would have put the laws in force against them, he was often withheld by the fear of displeasing his superiors : and thus without toleration, nay, in the face of the most tyrannical laws, they assembled, and often in great multitudes. I think a friend of mine, not many years ago, attended their preaching in a wood, not far from Nismes, where about ten thousand were supposed to be present, without the least interruption. This spirit of lenity had much encreased after the destruction of the Jesuits ; and a scheme of toleration was spoken of, and generally approved, before the late convulsions shook the State to its centre, and the Church to the ground, and for a while destroying all worship, left every man to his own religion.

It is very natural, that the Protestants, so long and grievously oppressed, should lend a cordial hand to a revolution, which must restore them to an equality with their fellow-citizens ; and that their hatred of Rome should make them rejoice in her fall : and if I may believe the assurances of the emigrant priests, the Jansenists readily took the oaths to government, and the churches from whence they were expelled. In all my researches I have never been able, among the multitudes I conversed with, to meet one Jansenist emigrant priest, though I greatly desired it. Probably they were not sorry to see their oppressors humbled, however grieved they might be in the event, to behold all religion overturned.

As perfect toleration is said to be allowed to all who are careful not to interfere with government, I should

hope some societies of real Christians, still edify one another, whilst they drop a tear over the miseries of their country, and sigh for peace.

The desolations wrought by republican principles, as well as arms, have been, as we have seen, the principal means of the destruction of the papal power among the nations which the French have overrun. In their own land the whole fabric of popery is levelled, and hardly nominal and constitutional bishops remain. Liberty is the only shrine professed to be frequented by Frenchmen ; without perceiving the chains under which they groan, the slaves of corruption, and the tools of the ambitious. But God will bring good out of all the evil permitted, and a glorious church shall come forth, I trust and pray, from the furnace, when the dross of popery and superstition, and a worldly sanctuary shall be purged away “ by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.” It is said that three million of persons professing Protestantism still remain in France, though I should think their numbers exaggerated. How numerous the Jansenists may be, I am unacquainted ; they would certainly welcome reformation. The amazing influx of foreign protestants, on a peace, cannot fail to be great : and if there be no dominant state religion, and a regular clergy maintained by the public ; or at least, if free toleration be granted to all, I have no doubt, the better half of the kingdom, whatever government may finally be established, will continue the profession of Christianity under some form ; and should even monarchy be restored with the hierarchy, the very state of the nation will probably require many modifications, and at least some such privileges as the edict of Nantes admitted. I am free to confess my apprehensions, that true evangelical religion will not as yet be

generally that of France, or of any other country ; I can only hope, that popery may cease to have the ascendant, though tolerated like the rest, and suffered to die a natural, and not a violent death. I am seeking the Church of the first born, whose names are written in Heaven ; and I trust it will be found, "when the Lord writeth up the people, that this and that man were born *there*."

Nothing can be more desolate than the present state of the Church in France ; on the side of profession of godliness scarcely any appears ; if there be any real Christianity remaining, it is concealed : the torrent still runs so strong against *all* religion. On the side of morals nothing can be more deplorable. A military government and its supporters, share the spoils of the crown, the nobles and ecclesiastics ; and spend with equal prodigality what they have acquired by means so unjust. The churches are deserted and shut up ; new play-houses, and places of entertainment, are opened and crowded. Divorce is allowed on the most frivolous pretexts ; and thus the sanctity of marriage destroyed : the dissolution of manners produces no shame, when countenanced by general practice and approbation. Republican virtue in France is very different from the stern, austere, and frugal manners of ancient Rome. They copy the luxurious Sybarites ; and what they hold by a tenure, probably as precarious as unjust, they wish to employ in present enjoyment : a few, perhaps lay up a hoard for an evil day. The general, established, and fashionable system evidently is, to live without God in the world, and eat and drink because to-morrow they die.

AUSTRIA.

AUSTRIA, always a bigotted adherent to the Romish pontiff, during a great part of this century, beheld the scepter swayed by a woman, who, though compelled to support her tottering authority, by Protestant alliances, ceased not her servile subjection to ecclesiastical superstitions. She was a rigid Catholic, and a devotee : but the spread of contagious infidel philosophy penetrated her court, and seized upon her successor. Unable, during her life-time, to take any steps, as she was too jealous of her authority to permit interposition, Joseph, her son, meditated designs to be executed the moment of her decease. Emulous of the fame of the great Frederic, the rival and plunderer of his house, he planned conquests over his Ottoman neighbors, and the spoil of the useless convents. His violent reforms convulsed his distant provinces. Having destroyed the barrier towns, and suppressed many of the religious houses, he ruined his own defences whilst he alienated the affections of his bigotted subjects. The spirit of revolt followed. Disappointment broke his spirits, his health suffered in his Turkish campaigns, and he fell the martyr to his own ambitious projects : leaving the Netherlands in a state of convulsion, preparative to all the miseries to which they have since been exposed.

Yet Rome severely suffered. The suppliant Pope visited the infidel Emperor, in hopes to obtain by entreaty, what he could no longer command by anathemas. He came too late : the day of his influence was past with the mother. The son was a Papist of a differ-

gent religion ; and chose to pursue his own purposes, very unconcerned about the interests of the Church ; so the old man returned as he came. I am not sure whether he left his benediction or his malediction behind him. To Joseph they would be exactly of the same import. But these things loosened the foundations of papal authority : despised, and without influence, the Pope silently submitted, and Austria paid him only such respect as suited her own interest or inclination. Thus every where the bands of allegiance were broken ; and if true religion found no protection, the pontiff sunk into contempt, though popery remained.

POLAND.

THIS great kingdom once subsisted, subject to the papal dominion. It hath ceased to be numbered among the nations. Poland, long the prey of ambitious competitors for an elective sovereignty, hath fallen into the claws of three eagles, that have divided the spoil between them. For this sovereignty, Augustus of Saxony, basely bartered his religion, and with the throne of Poland annexed to his hereditary dominions, hoped to transmit them together to his family. The popery remains—the throne is lost. Are they ashamed to return again to the Protestant pale, since their heads have ceased to wear a crown ?

In the treaty of Oliva, guaranteed by the adjoining powers, the Poles admitted the toleration of dissidents of all denominations. The most numerous body of these was of the Greek Church, though there were many of other communions, Lutherans, and reformed. Even the Jews in no small number found protection in

Poland : but the dominant religion remained popish, always insolent, and often oppressive. Intestine divisions, bred by ambition, rent the land. A patriot King, laboring to enlarge the bounds of liberty, was unable to controul the spirit of polish licentiousness. The intrigues of traitors to their country first ravaged the provinces, and then called in aid from those who only meant to carve for themselves. The inability to resist these intruding neighbors became evident, from the first partition of the country. The remainder rested not long an independent sovereignty. The three mighty monarchs of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, agreed to divide the whole between them *for the good of the people*, dethroned the worthy Poniatowski, and parcelled out his dominions according to their several conveniences and contiguity. An act the most unprincipled, the most atrocious, and such as never was committed by the most infamous robber which the gallows ever bore : but they were emperors and kings, and to suspect their justice, would be treason against their majesty. Religion could be no object of theirs ; and so, eventually, the cause of God and truth was benefited by their ambition. Popery no longer possessed the power, or revenues, which could make it formidable. Each sovereign took what he liked, and only left such a provision for religious worship as his own liberality allowed. Toleration was a necessary consequence. A Protestant and a Greek must prevent their subjects from the oppressions of popery ; and a Catholic monarch himself was compelled, politically to afford the same indulgence, that he might not lose the Protestants or Greeks, who could so easily have taken refuge with their neighbors and countrymen. Thus the earth helped the woman. No more money went to Rome—no more dominion could she exercise. They who had

seized the lands, chose themselves to exercise the supremacy. Thus Poland became lost to Rome as a kingdom of its dependence ; and the subjects, hating the national injustice committed, became certainly capable of enjoying more happiness and religious liberty than ever before. I am considering the real church of God as the desirable object, and as such, hope that much has been gained by the subjugation of Poland ; and, that in the great system of true religion, this event may be reckoned among those which are auspicious ; as casting down the barriers of papal power and persecution, and opening a freer course for the word of God, where it may run and be glorified.

GERMANY.

THE princes and prelates of the popish communion, true to their principles, during the great part of this century, continued to oppress and harass their Protestant subjects, and to compel numerous emigrations. Such were the poor *Palatins*, whom our hospitable land received ; and the *Saltzburghers*, who found an asylum in Holland, and Prussia, and other countries around them. Will men, will those professing the name of Christians, for ever bite and devour one another ? Shall bigotry, blind to its own interest, glut its malice by murdering its best subjects ? but remonstrance is vain, where popery, only intent on furious conversions, will bear no reply, but turn or burn. Yet, in the progress of years, a gentler spirit hath entered ; the increase of knowledge, and the philosophic interest diffused, have rendered men more tolerant, if not more religious : they are become wiser, if not better ; and for some time have ceased so bitterly to goad those whom

it ought to have been their first care to cherish. Matters are, indeed, just now wonderfully embroiled; in the present sinking state of the Church of Rome, it is more than probable, that Germany will see some of its Catholic episcopats exchanged for temporal principalities; and not impossible but that the matters of religion may be put out of the question; and the bishoprics own subjection to protestant princes: and if this alteration of governors introduce a more general toleration, and the banishment of persecution for conscience sake, that is all which true religion seeks or wishes, and the Church of Christ will be so far advantaged.

On the whole, from this review of the Romish Church, and the particular members of which it is composed, I think it evidently appears, that the cause of God and truth has wonderfully advanced in the general scale of the nations, owning subjection to, or rather in union with, Rome. Her power is weakened, her riches dissipated, her subjects diminished, and her fall, I hope, approaching. When this desirable event shall be consummated, He only knows, who sitteth on the throne, rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

CHAP. IV.

ON THE GREEK AND EASTERN CHURCHES.

THE very little communication which subsists between Europe and the greater part of the Ottoman Empire, affords few materials for the history of the Greek Church ; which, sunk into servitude and oppression under the Ottoman yoke, and covered with ignorance, hardly lifts its head to observation. Yet, notwithstanding its inferiority, this body refuses to coalesce with Rome, and obstinately repulses all efforts of subjugation : nor has that all-grasping see been more successful with the Nestorians and Monophysites, who steadily maintain their independence, both of Rome and of Constantinople. In the humiliating circumstances of these Christians, little efforts can be hoped, such as distinguished them formerly in the extension of the Christian pale. Yet it must be noted, that the number of Christians collectively under the Ottoman government is still immense ; and though squeezed and drained by the Turkish Balhaws, as indeed are all the other subjects, yet they are allowed the uninterrupted enjoyment of their religion and churches. And if you would judge by the proverb, “ as merry as a Greek,” which is said to be their natural disposition to this day, they contrive to bear their burdens without losing their vivacity. During the late commotions and furious attack of the Russians on the Turkish empire, they found cordial assistance from the Greeks in the Morea, who would have rejoiced to have seen their religion triumphant.

phant. And the same was said of the Cophits in Egypt, that they wished to have welcomed them there; and had the famous Ali Bey been supported in his rebellion, the consequences to the Ottoman empire might have been more fatal: as it was, after many a disastrous conflict, and parting with vast provinces contiguous to Russia, as the price of peace, Greece and the Isles of the Archipelago, where the Russian fleet rode triumphant, were abandoned; the poor Greeks returned to the house of their prison, and their dream of balcyon days vanished. From all that can be collected of those whom war or curiosity have led to visit these regions, the state of religion among them is miserably low; reduced to superstitious forms and observances; and the papas or priests little better informed than the people.

In Egypt the same ignorance prevails, and the same depression: yet they have still churches and monasteries preserved inviolate. Their poverty probably is their best protection.

All attempts to carry the gospel into Abyssinia have failed, as we have mentioned; and the last embassy planned at Rome proved as ineffectual as all the former. Even the Moravian brethren, those indefatigable servants of the heathen, were unable to effect that design; and after abortive efforts, were compelled to return to Grand Cairo: from whence, by leave of the patriarch, they visited the Cophits at Behrussa, and formed a small society, that was very hopeful: but the intestine divisions and conflicts in the year 1783, drove them from the country, and compelled their return to Europe.

One entertaining and adventurous traveller of our own, alone has penetrated the country, and returned to tell the story, as marvellous in many instances, as bearing authentic marks of truth. The motley Christianity still practised among the Abyssinians, will hardly be admitted to deserve that appellation. As to any thing which has the semblance of *spiritual religion*, it seems unknown. Savage in manners, cruel, involved in perpetual contests, they scarcely maintain any profession worth the name of godliness, though abundant in superstition : and their jealousy of strangers is so great, and the danger of visiting them so imminent, that few will be ever tempted to tread in Bruce's steps. His medical skill procured him favor ; and he claims to have accomplished the honor of his journey, the discovery of the fountain head of the Nile. Shall an object like that, however, engage such perseverance and zeal ; and shall not the greater objects of the everlasting gospel awaken some adventurous spirits once more to tempt the dangers of the desert ; and seek to revive the remembrance of him, who was early known, and obeyed even in Abyssinia ? surely yet there is hope.

In number of Churches, Bruce says, no country can equal them. Every great man cancels his crimes by building one in his life time, or by leaving a sum for that purpose at his death : and every field of battle has an erection by the conqueror to celebrate his victory. The number of ecclesiastics is considerable, as may be supposed, and there are many monasteries, but the buildings are far from magnificent. The churches are thatched, and round, and the summit a cone. They are supported on wooden pillars, with the roof projecting to form a covered walk. They are full of wretched pictures, but no image, nor any thing embossed is

permitted within : circumcision and many other Jewish rites are in use among the Abyssinians. The sacrament is administered in both kinds ; and the gospels read through once a year in the service. The superior is called Abuna ; but their ignorance, bigotry, and superstition are equal to any part of the Greek Church, and probably greater. The Romish missionaries have been so rudely treated, and the difficulty of penetrating the country is so great, that they will hardly attempt it again.

THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

Exhibits an immense body, and the efforts which have been made to extend her bounds through Siberia to the sea of Okotsk and Oonalaska ; and to the opposite coasts of America. have carried the Greek ceremonies to these vastly distant regions, as well as to the Tartars southward, and to the Samoides in the north. But this hath been done by the ambition of a Catherine, to extend her dominion, rather than with any missionary zeal to spread the knowledge of Christianity. As yet the state of that country, however increasing in acquisitions of knowledge and civilization, affords no remarkable specimens, of which at least I am informed. of eminent religion. Their worship and ceremonies are full of superstition, and the mere performance of their ritual is all their devotion. The noted intemperance of priests and people speaks a very low state of religious practice. They are hardly yet emerging from barbarism. at a distance from the capitals ; and not a little of their ancient paganism mingles with their Christianity.

The *Roskolniki* formerly mentioned, or as they now call themselves the *Starovertzi*, or believers according

to the old faith, are a numerous body, especially in Siberia, among the Don Cossacks, and in many of the southern parts of Asia. With them Pugatscheff, who gave such an alarm to Catharine II. took refuge : and their past sufferings from the dominant church, and rooted aversion to the established hierarchy and ceremonies, led them to be his most zealous partisans. They have bishops and priests among them, who baptise and minister the communion, but as they have suffered so much, and are still persecuted, they are obliged as much as possible to conceal themselves. Of their discipline and principles, I have found no explicit account, though I should augur well of them, if the relation before me is to be depended upon, that the hordes of Cossacks are extremely bigotted to *pure orthodoxy*. I confess I have some suspicions, this may mean a very different Idea from that affixed to it in the History of the Church we have been describing. However, the courage of one of their priests named Toma deserves observation. He went to Moscow, and boldly preached against the invocation of saints. Being threatened by the clergy, his zeal fired him to take an ax, and entering a church, to hew in pieces the images of St. Alexius and the Virgin. He was seized and condemned, first to have his right hand consumed in the fire, and afterwards to be burnt alive. A sentence which he suffered with the most sedate fortitude, continuing in the flames to testify against the abuses of the dominant church.

In the Greek communion, the same bigotted hatred of all who differ from them appears as in the Romish, and the priests would gladly persecute, if the liberality and good sense of the different successive monarchs, and particularly of the late infamous and infidel, though wise and politic woman, had not made it a maxim of gov-

ernment to tolerate all religions ; and to invite into their vast, but thinly peopled dominions, persons of all denominations.

This hath eventually opened a door for the entrance of evangelical truth. Several settlements of German Protestants have been established on the Wolga. A Church of Moravian brethren hath been formed at Sarepta, near Astrachan, with a view to a mission among the Calmucks. Finding their attempts ineffectual, they have directed their attention to their German brethren, who were not very far distant from them, with happier auspices. By their means several evangelical Lutheran ministers have been settled among the colonists and societies formed of real Christians, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour, by their exemplary conversation.

A more successful effort hath also been made by these zealous brethren in Livonia, and the adjacent Islands in the Baltic under the Russian government. Societies have there been established, in fellowship with the Moravians, and attended by them, though not separated from the Lutheran communion, but remaining under their own pastors : and these are said to amount to twenty thousand persons.

I hope more at large to detail in its place the labors and success of these faithful servants of our Saviour throughout the world. Though not joined with them in church order, and differing in some sentiments of religious truth, I feel myself bound from near forty years acquaintance with many of the brethren, to speak of those whom I have known, as men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and truly devoted to the work and ser-

vice of our crucified Lord. I am perfectly convinced of the unfaithful reports of a Ramius, excluded from their society for immorality ; as of a Warburton, a Lavington, and the translator of Mosheim, who have adopted the calumnies of so prejudiced an accuser.*

With peculiarities, perhaps some of them exceptionable, yet admitting no such impure ideas as these men have imputed to them, the more the principles of the brethren are truly known, and the more intimately their lives are scrutinized, the more will they be acknowledged among the few faithful who follow the Lamb of God in the regeneration.

The Russian Church has led me into this digression ; within whose precincts I can find no object, on which I am able to dwell with such complaisance as on the labors of the Moravian brethren. They seem to afford the only pleasing specimens of that spiritual Christianity which is the subject of these enquiries. From the Greek Church also *the brethren* derive their origin ; though having revived from the lowest state of decay in the bosom of the Lutherans, and most corresponding in religious opinions, with the confession of Augsburg, with them they will most properly be classed, and come under consideration in the next chapter.

* I am informed that the impure and malignant note inserted by the translator of Mosheim, against *the brethren*, in his ecclesiastical history, he would from conviction of its injustice have expunged : but the copy being shown to the author of *the divine legation*, the bishop engaged him to let it stand, and there it remains, a monument of the bitterness, bigotry, and falsehood of these accusers of the brethren. [Author's note.]

CHAP. V.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

AN. **T**HE treaty of Westphalia had placed the Lutheran cause on so solid a basis, as could not easily be shaken. Peace and security produced a too common effect. declension. Their Church continued in the profession of the same doctrines and established formularies; it used the same ceremonies, and nominally supported the same discipline; but awful departures from both, marked how much under the same name the reality of religion may be changed, without its being generally perceived. Offenders against morals were pretty nearly overlooked, and all the superior ranks in life raised above submission to any ecclesiastical censure. Nor were the ministers themselves very ready to give the faithful rebuke, much less to denounce the rebellious. Those who defied their pastors, and could defend themselves by wealth, influence and interest, had nothing to apprehend; and as Melheim remarked, all ecclesiastical restraint of offenders lost its power, and they triumphed in impunity. The doctrine also professed and subscribed as from the beginning, underwent a very considerable change in the minds of the professors; among whom the progress of philosophy had been great; and who adopted the more fashionable, and mis-called *rational divinity*. The doctrines of *free grace*, of *justification by faith alone*, and *predestination*, required too much implicit credit, and too little mathematical demonstration, and metaphysical reasoning to suit the wise men of that day. The difference between Luther on

the Galatians, and the sermons and expositions of modern Lutherans, pretty nearly resembled those of our own divines, compared with the thirty-nine articles, and the assembly's catechism.

The *Pietists* at Halle, with professor Francke at their head, continued to maintain much of the life of true religion among them, and some educated there, spread the favour of divine grace through different parts of Germany. They encountered much opposition from their bigotted, pharisaical or philosophical brethren, and were exposed to much obloquy for their rigid maxims, and resolute rejection of all unhallowed conformity to the manners and amusements of a wicked world. But as the century advanced the fervor of pietism abated, and iniquity abounding, the love of many waxed cold. The general body of the Lutheran Church sank into a Laodicean state, and all their zeal was expended on maintaining the forms and formula of Lutheranism instead of the spirit of Christianity. Many ranked high as profound scholars, and indefatigable students, and were more distinguished by scientific attainments, than for vigorous efforts to preach and teach Jesus Christ. The infidel philosophy had too generally diffused its fatal miasmata, and infested the mass of literati; the nobles, who looked down on the vulgar herd; the professors of law and physic; and the army, who prided themselves on their rejection of educational prejudices, and thought it a proof of superior attainment, to be wiser above what was written.

This spreading contagion received especial activity under the patronage of the famous or infamous Frederic, *the great*, in infidelity. Other sovereigns were proud to resemble him: the men of the most atheistical cast

became the admired oracles of the age. From this spawn crawled forth the new sects of Weishaupt and Kant, with their illumines, avowing their object to exterminate the Christian name and worship; and terrifying mankind with the monsters bred from this hebridous race of Philosophers and Theosophists.

Robison and Baruel have followed them into their lurking holes, and unveiled some of their mysteries and anarchical designs to cover the earth with revolutions and bloodshed: not that I think so much of the mischief done is to be imputed to them, as these suppose; allowing them all possible malignity, their power could not reach to the extent these authors have suggested; nor were many of the persons on whom Baruel pours out his vials of wrath deserving his censures. Too partial to his jesuit friends, he would avenge their quarrel; and by endeavoring to prove too much, weakens the force of his own arguments. Montesquieu assuredly ranks on a very different line from Rousseau; and Necker and Turgot deserve not to be reckoned among the pests of mankind—but popery is popery still, under all its humiliations.

Yet the Lord had not forsaken the earth, nor left his truth without witnesses. Some preserved the purity of the faith amidst the too general apostacy. In different parts of Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, were found pastors after the great Shepherd's mind, who fed the flock of Christ with the sincere milk of the word. And though as the century advanced, the light of truth grew more obscure, and the cause of Christ seemed much to decay, of late, symptoms of happy revival have appeared in various parts, and the daring front of barefaced infidelity has roused the dormant zeal of many to lift

up the standard of the cross against the floods of impiety.

Among those peculiarly distinguished for their Christian zeal, one choice body of confessors of the evangelical doctrines has arisen in the bosom of the Lutheran Church; and from small beginnings growing into eminence of excellence, claims a particular mention. No name of professing Protestants in our day has displayed more fervent zeal for the Lamb of God, and the characteristic principles of Christianity, as connected with his blood-shedding for us, than THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN. Under a long series of persecution and oppression from the bigotry of popery, they had been reduced to the lowest ebb of misery; and the few scattered remnants of that name seemed fast approaching to utter extinction; when, from the dust of death, the Moravian Church sprang, as the fabled phoenix from her ashes, and acquiring fresh splendor from the flames, went forth to call back their Lutheran brethren to the Augsburg Confession, to the essential doctrines of revelation, and to a life of greater purity than was generally in vogue. They met, as will be the case with all who rise up to witness against a wicked world that its deeds are darkness, many an abuser: and if the charges laid against them were to be implicitly received, they would become objects of horror and aversion, instead of living witnesses for the Christian doctrine. Happily they are now better known, and their enemies are found liars. Mistakes were magnified into crimes, and expressions ill understood, received an interpretation the very reverse of what the brethren intended; nor is it needful to vindicate peculiarities in their discipline, which have given the handle of abuse and ridicule to their maligners. It is sufficient to observe, that in the great fundamentals of Christianity, they have displayed a zeal to

promote the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, which hath produced the happiest effects, not only in Europe, but throughout the world. In their lives and conversations, those who have known them best, without having formed any union with them as a Church, will acknowledge that they are not only blameless and harmless, but eminently exemplary. Let us give therefore honor where honor is due, and never suffer prejudice to misrepresent any denomination of our truly Christian brethren, because they gather not with us.

The state of the Moravian Church in the present century, forms a prominent feature in the happy revival of evangelical religion ; and justly claims a niche in that temple of the living God, which is the object of our present survey.

AN. 1722. Dispersed, distressed, reduced to the lowest ebb, overwhelmed by the persecutions of popery in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, under the bigoted Austrians, the Church of the Brethren, in the beginning of the century had nearly disappeared, and their light seemed ready to be put out in Israel : but few men were left, and they of little estimation in this world ; and no where could they find rest or establishment. In this extremity, three or four poor families, under the spiritual superintendence of that venerable man of God, CHRISTIAN DAVID, migrated from Moravia into upper Lusatia, in search of some sequestered corner of the earth, where, hid from popish persecution, they might worship God our Saviour in peace and purity. At the village of Berthelsdorff, belonging to the since well-known COUNT ZINZENDORFF, they met from his steward, Heitz, an hospitable reception. The Count himself was at the court of Dresden ; but, on being in-

formed of the arrival of the emigrants, he gave orders to encourage them ; they were assisted to build cottages for their families, and some uncultivated lands were allotted to them, which their industry soon rendered productive.

The Count himself, with his relation BARON WATTEVILLE, had been educated at the university of Halle ; and early imbibed a happy tincture of the Pietism long retained in that seminary. The manners of the refugees were so congenial with his own, as to engage his fostering affection : this drew others of the same fraternity to join their brethren ; and a new village arose, called Hernhuth, the cradle of the reviving Church of the Moravians, whose increase hath been since so blessed, and for which the heathen especially shall praise Him, who can produce the greatest effects by instruments the most apparently feeble and inadequate.

Under the patronage of Count Zinzendorff, and his worthy pastor, Rothe, the infant colony continued to prosper, and spread its branches through Germany, Denmark, Holland, England, and America. The Count himself, a zealous Lutheran, at first desired they would unite with the established Church at Berthelsdorff : but the brethren preferred adherence to their ancient regimen. Finding himself unable to prevail with them, to recede from their own form of ecclesiastical government, he after much deliberation agreed, that they should observe the Moravian ritual : and though he himself continued in communion with the Lutheran Church to his dying day, he consented, with Baron Watteville, to be appointed to the presidency of their affairs, spiritual and temporal, in conjunction with

the elders of the congregation, as their council and associates.

The following sketch of the nature of the church order among the brethren, is all my limits can admit.

SUPREME in all *the unity of the brethren* is the GENERAL SYNOD : consisting of deputies from all the congregations, with the bishops, and elders, the inspectors of churches, and certain laymen.

By this synod, the ELDERS' CONFERENCE is chosen, for the direction of all matters, during the intervals of the session of the synod : to this all are subject—bishops, elders, laborers, and every individual in close church union with the brethren.

The bishops are chosen by lot, out of a number proposed by the conference for the office. They claim no superiority, nor exercise any jurisdiction, but as empowered and directed by the *elders' conference*. They have no fixed diocese or district, but remove from place to place, as stationed or sent by the *conference*.

The peculiar office of bishops is to ordain bishops, elders, and laborers at home, and among the heathen; such as being approved by the elders' conference as candidates, are by the lot selected. They also preach, visit the congregations, regulate their affairs, and encourage the laborers, and all the holy brethren.

Deacons and deaconesses visit, attend, and care for the sick and poor of each congregation of the different sexes.

They have *œconomies*, or *choir houses*, where they live together in community. The single men, and single women, widows, and widowers apart, each under the superintendence of elderly persons of their own class. In these houses, every person who is able, and has not an independent support, labors in his own occupation, and contributes a stipulated sum for his maintenance. They live thus at a less expense and more comfortably, than they could have done separately ; besides the singular advantages of mutual communion, and daily worship.

The children of each sex are educated with peculiar care, by brethren and sisters appointed for that service ; their object is to preserve them from the corruption that is in the world, and to prevent as much as possible the knowledge of evil from ever reaching their eyes or ears. Trained up under discipline, from their tenderest years, their subjection to their superiors and elders is singular, and appears particularly striking in their *missions* and *marriages*.

In the former, those who have offered themselves on the service, and are approved as candidates, wait their several calls, referring themselves entirely to the decision of the lot ; and I believe never hesitate when that hath decided the place of their destination.

In *marriage*, they may only form a connection with those of their own communion. The brother who marries out of the congregation is immediately cut off from church fellowship. Sometimes a sister, by express license from the elders' conference, is permitted to marry a person of approved piety, in another communion, yet still to join in their church ordinances as before.

A brother may make his own choice of a partner in the society ; but as all intercourse between the different sexes is carefully avoided, very few opportunities of forming particular attachments are found, and they usually rather refer their choice to the Church, than decide for themselves. And as the lot must be cast to sanction their union, each receives his partner as a divine appointment ; and however strange this method may appear to those who consult only their passions or their interest, it is observable, that no where fewer unhappy marriages are found than among the brethren.

This frequent appeal to the lot, seems the peculiar characteristic of the Moravian Church, and has furnished their adversaries with the objection, as if they supposed themselves, and meant to impress the idea upon others, of being under the immediate direction of God in matters thus determined. I confess, I can see no Scripture order or warrant to countenance such appeal, nor any such practice adopted, in the Apostles' days, or in the primitive Church. The single instance, Acts i. 26. when the sacred college was to be filled up by one of the two persons chosen by the Church for the office of apostle, is no precedent, nor sanctions any similar appeal to the lot.

But whilst I advert to the peculiarities of their discipline, I wish ever to keep in view, and hold up to the attention of all other churches, the characteristic Moravian excellence of missionary zeal.

I have before me the pleasing accounts lately published of the happy success of their labors in twenty-six different missions, besides a variety of attempts made in other places, and by providential hindrances defeated.

The Danish islands of St. Thomas, St. Jan, and St. Croix, have, by their ministry, received the light of the gospel. and that especially among the most pitiable and oppressed of human beings, the negro slaves—to them their labors have been singularly blessed.

In as abundant a manner also have their efforts been crowned with success in our English islands, Jamaica, Antigua, Nevis, Barbadoes, and St. Kitt's, where many thousands of our sable-colored brethren have been called by their preaching and conversation to the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and worship God in spirit and in truth.

The Greenland Labradore congregations, afford objects of wonder, delight, and thankfulness. Even in these inhospitable climes, and amidst those savage manners, the power of changing grace becomes more eminently displayed—How precious is the name Jesus from the lips of an Esquimaux ?

The Arrowack Indians, and the negroes at Surinam and Berbice, have been collected into bodies of faithful people by the brethren's patience and perseverance.

Canada, and the United States of North America, furnish happy evidences of the powerful word of a crucified Jesus, among the wild and yellow wanderers in the forests, and boundless plains of that vast continent.

Even those esteemed the last of human beings, in brutishness and ignorance, the Hottentots, have felt the divine efficacy of the blood of the Lamb that was slain, and owned the crucified man on Calvary, for their God and Saviour ; have been formed into Christian socie-

ties, and upwards of seven hundred are said to be now worshipping him with their faithful pastors, at Bavians Cloof, near the Cape of Good Hope, and live under their tuition, and in their happy communion, believing to the saving of their souls.

In all these various regions, no less than an hundred and forty missionaries are now employed, besides the host who have counted not their lives dear unto themselves, and died in the arduous service. These in general support themselves, and the work, by the assiduous labor of their own hands, in their several arts and occupations; and, like the apostle Paul, toil night and day, that they may require nothing from the heathen, and have to give to him that needeth.

By the persevering zeal of these men of God, upwards of TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND of the most destitute of mankind, in different regions of the earth, are recovered from the power of Satan unto God, and now walk with him as dear children, adorning the doctrine of Jesus, by a conversation such as becometh godliness; and thousands departed in the faith, rest in his bosom.

I might mention their efforts to illumine the distant East, the coast of Coromandel, and the Nicobar Islands, with the light of the sun of righteousness; their attempts to penetrate into Abyssinia, to carry the gospel to Persia and Egypt, and to ascend the mountains of Caucasus; for to all these regions, and many others, bath love for immortal souls, and zeal for the Redeemer's glory, carried these indefatigable missionaries, and often have they earned the meed of highest approbation, where their labors have been least successful. Let their enemies hear and be confounded—these are epif-

tles of commendation written by the spirit of the living God. Many, swayed by prejudice, presume to condemn, what they have neither examined with candor, nor truly understood ; let them produce any similar effects by their instrumentality, and then they may be entitled to attention. Till then, let shame stop the mouth of calumny, and such transcendent excellence claim the tribute of admiration, and be held in deserved honor.

How so small a body as the Moravian Church is equal to such exertions, and capable of providing so many missionaries, and furnishing an expense so necessarily great, is surprising. The whole number of their members in Europe does not, if I am rightly informed, exceed twelve thousand brethren ; of which, about three thousand are in Great Britain and Ireland ; and these not in general the most opulent, or high in any mercantile line. But their liberality aboundeth, and it is no less pleasing to remark the support which their missions receive from the cordial affection of Christian brethren in all denominations. The good providence of God continues to raise up for them new helpers, and to furnish annual supplies for the support of so noble an undertaking. Indeed, in such a cause, the mean shibboleth of party should be mentioned no more, and every real Christian delight to help forward this great labor of love.

Their example also should provoke the jealousy of every Christian Church. They have demonstrated the practicability of establishing the everlasting gospel in regions the most dreary and inhospitable, and among nations the most rude and ferocious. And shall we not kindle into emulation ? Catch from them some spark of zeal, and awake to like vigor-

ous exertions ? A thousand openings court our entrance into lands vast, fertile, populous, genial, easy of access, where the inhabitants are mild, friendly, tractable, presenting every hopeful prospect of success, ready to welcome our labors of love ; regarding us as beings of a superior order, and gently upbraiding us for our neglect of them. In how many places are the difficulties apparently less, and the advantages unspeakably greater than in those fields, which our Moravian brethren have attempted to cultivate, and with such encouraging success ? Have we less zeal, less wisdom, less patience, less perseverance than they ? Let shame stimulate, if a sense of duty and love to the souls of men do not constrain us. Let us hear at last the dying groans of the distant heathen, crying, Come over and help us.

This revival of religion among the Moravians, hath not failed also to produce as happy effects at home as among the heathen. Many of their Lutheran and Reformed Brethren have greatly profited by their fraternal intercourse, without connecting themselves in their church order. A spirit of more animated Christianity has been revived, in Germany and its vicinity. They have formed a large association of ministers from the frozen hills of Norway, to the Carpathian mountains, who assemble annually at Hernhutt, in Lusatia ; and those who cannot attend, communicate with their brethren by their correspondence. These all endeavor to strengthen each others hands in the work of the Lord, without distinction of Lutheran or Calvinists ; to provoke one another to love, and greater devotedness to God our Saviour. They are growing into a host, and though not many in any one country, yet, when collected, form a glorious body of confessors, whose light can-

not but shine before men, and whose zealous labors in their several parishes tend to revive true Christianity.

It is one of the happiest features of the present day, and among the tokens for good to the Lutheran Church, that there is still in the midst of it the unextinguished flame of real love to him who died for us and rose again. I doubt not, but these men of God meet with many a rebuff, and harsh censure from their more lukewarm brethren; but the religion of Jesus requires the stamp of peculiarity; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow him, will have no characteristic mark of discipleship.

Some other missionary efforts within the Lutheran pale, deserve mention. To the honor of the Danish government be it recorded, that they started among the first, and have been successful in this glorious career. Their ministers visited Greenland with the gospel; and their mission to the coast of Malabar commenced early in this century. It hath been pursued with unwearied zeal, and God hath crowned the labors with singular tokens of his approbation. The English *Society for propagating the Gospel*, have greatly helped these missionary efforts of Danes and Germans. And oh that my own countrymen, with more devotedness offered themselves to the work! the harvest is truly plenteous; but the laborers are few. May the great Master thrust forth more laborers into the harvest!

The nations who maintain the Lutheran faith, are the same as from the beginning of the Reformation. Various changes have happened in the several kingdoms, but none in their religious profession. Denmark,

Sweden, Norway, Holstein, and all the coasts of the Baltic to the Vistula, chiefly continue within this pale. Saxony, with the other states, who first embraced this doctrine, hath steadfastly persevered in the same confession of faith to this day. Though it is not a little singular, that the two great pillars of Lutheranism originally, have both gone back to the Romish Church. The

Elector of Saxony bartered his religion for A.D. 1698. the crown of Poland, and the Prince of Hesse, not long ago, for other considerations.

Yet this made no change in the government of their countries, which, though the head was apostate, preserved their faith inviolate. A power, hardly known in the commencement of the century, has spread from Brandenburg his vast acquisitions on every side; and is become in Germany nominally, the head of the Protestant cause. In point of religion, it would be superfluous to say any thing of Frederic the Great or his successors; nevertheless, the monarch who extends and supports religious toleration on the broadest basis, whether heathen or philosopher, may be owned as the Church's nursing father. The true Church asks no support, but peace and tolerance.

Thus, departed as the body of the Lutheran Church is from the tenets of their great Reformer, and much as the declensions from the living power of religion are to be lamented, a precious seed is still preserved in the midst of her through all the lands of her communion. The word of God is in every hand. The formulary of doctrine and worship is sound, and only those to be blamed who depart from the purity of the one, and the spirituality of the other. A happy æra we hope approaches—a great and evident revival of spiritual religion appears in many places, widely dispersed, and maintaining cor.

respondence with each other, to quicken, comfort, and encourage each others hands and hearts in the work of the Lord. We rejoice in the prospect, and knowing that Christ is not divided, share their blessings as our own. We wish to be provoked to jealousy by their example, and to see the Lutheran Church a praise in the earth.

CHAP. VI.

ON THE REFORMED CHURCH.

IF we estimate the extent of the Reformed Church by the vastness of empire, and commercial settlements possessed by those who make profession of that faith, we shall see her spreading forth her arms to both the Indies, and embracing the habitable globe. Before the late unhappy contest with America, peopled chiefly by emigrants from England, Christianity had spread its light and power, not merely through the provinces which border the Atlantic, but had penetrated deep into the interior recesses of that immense region; and some noble efforts had been made to communicate to the wandering Indians the knowledge of salvation. The vast island of Newfoundland was colonised for the sake of the fishery; and the gospel has been since planted there, with some happy and increasing effect. Even the savage coast of Labrador, through the zeal of the Moravians, has received the light of the truth; and in the highest northern latitudes, England has established forts and factories though I have never yet heard of any missionary labors at Hudson's Bay or its dependencies. Canada has added a new field. Though popery is still the dominant religion, the government is protestant, and an open door set for the gospel there to enter. Of the state of religion in all this vast northern Continent, I shall speak hereafter, observing only, that amidst many declensions and revivals, much of the power of godliness yet remains; and some vigorous efforts have been made of late, through the zeal of different bodies, to rouse up

a deeper sense of divine things in the minds of that vast nation, not yet well consolidated, though it is hoped, daily settling on a firmer basis. With toleration of all denominations, *the reformed religion* is that generally professed in North America, whether by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, or Independents, and many others, of the various sects, which every where people that immense republic.

In the East, the extensive settlements and conquests of English and Dutch, have greatly reduced the Portuguese and popery; many vestiges of which remain in the Carnatic, and on the coast of Malabar. Yet it must be lamented, that so little efforts have been made by either of these powers, proportionate to their ability, and the greatness of their empire, to spread the knowledge of salvation through the countries of their obedience. What might not Holland have done from Batavia, and her immense extent of insular dominion? What from Ceylon? What from the Cape of Good Hope? What from innumerable other parts where Batavian arms have triumphed, and their conquests spread? Every where, indeed, in their capital cities and settlements, they have established their religion, and sent ministers to officiate; but I have not yet heard of any attempts to evangelize the natives, nor of a single missionary among an hundred thousand Chinese settled at Batavia. Commerce and gain seem to have engrossed their attention. Indeed, I am sorry to record, that they have rather frowned on missions, and instead of forwarding the labors of the good Moravians, both at the Cape and in America, have obstructed the work, and eyed with jealousy and aversion, the noble and disinterested laborers, who, for the sake of the poor heathen have been willing to spend and be spent. They, as many others, are afraid, least

the knowledge of the liberty with which Christ hath made us free, should loosen the yoke of tyranny and oppression, under which in general through the East the natives are held; at least this is generally made the pretext for opposition. Though nothing can be clearer, than that natives of our own religion, and attached to us by these most powerful bonds, must prove our best friends and auxiliaries: but bigotry is as blind, as commerce is jealous and rapacious.

The English extent of foreign empire is still more vast, and of late increasing to a magnitude rather terrifying. Bengal, alone, with the settlements in the Carnatic, is said to comprise thirty millions of inhabitants; and in every province, town and purgannah, our power is absolute; and none to hinder any efforts of missionary labor. But throughout this empire, not only no vigorous efforts to make the gospel known have ever been attempted by the India Company, in whom the sovereignty is vested; but contrarywise, the attempts of others have in great measure been frowned upon, and every application of those whose zeal prompted them to the service, been rejected; though they merely requested permission to go, and only asked the common protection of government to all peaceable subjects.

It is well known that in Bengal, and all the vast provinces to the north; in every thing which regards Christianity, the natives have been hitherto utterly neglected. Even the very few clergymen who have visited the capitals of our settlements in India, have been generally too infected with the epidemic rage of the country, to amass wealth, in order to return with it to Europe, an object utterly inconsistent with every thing divine, holy and heavenly.

Two or three zealous Baptist ministers, affected with the deplorable state of the poor Hindoos, have lately passed unnoticed into the interior of the country, with a view of communicating to them the gospel of Christ. They are employed in an indigo manufactory ; and improve the Lord's day and their intervals of leisure, in conversing and discoursing with the natives, Mahometans, Bramins and others, on the subject of Christianity : a considerable attention is paid to their ministry, and though no open converts have submitted to baptism, they report commencements sufficiently auspicious, to encourage perseverance and hope of happy success ; but what especially must render their labors highly respectable in the sight of Christians of all denominations, is their indefatigable industry, with the help of some Bramins and Pundits, to translate the Bible into the Bengalese tongue ; and which is now about to be published in Bengal, and to be disseminated among the natives. God speed the glorious attempt ! His word can never be read in vain.

In the *Carnatic* some light of the glorious gospel of Christ, hath been long diffused by the zealous efforts of the Danish missionaries from Tranquebar ; and a few faithful foreign Lutheran ministers, continue to labor with some success in the vicinity of Madras, and in the Tanjore country, supported chiefly by the Society for Propagating the Gospel in England. At the head of these is that aged and venerable servant of Christ, Mr. Swartz,* near forty years ago, I think, my friend and companion at Oxford ; Mr. Gericke, Mr. Janike, and one or two more, exhausted with labor, advanced in age, and going down to the grave, with little prospect

* This blessed laborer, I hear, has just entered into his rest.
[Author's note.]

of successors animated by the same spirit. They are incessant in soliciting fresh and more numerous assistants, but few hear their call, or fly to share the toils of missionary service. God seems to have given their preaching such success among the natives, as to render it no longer doubtful, that however strong the barrier, which the Bramanic casts and national manners, and especially the sanctioned immoralities of the Gentoos, may have erected against the Gospel of Christ, no obstacle is insurmountable to zeal and perseverance. If God will work, then none can let it. They must indeed be fearfully inexcusable who enter not in themselves, and those who are willing to enter, and devote their lives and substance to the service they hinder. Where a thousand missionaries would find more employment, than their most zealous labors could fulfil, four or five aged Germans now fan the dying embers, and scarcely keep the expiring flame alive.

The good Moravians, as I am informed, after abortive efforts to spread the gospel in the Nicobar Islands, and having no such prospects as encourage their stay in the Carnatic, are removing their laborers to Europe, to be employed in more promising fields of usefulness among the heathen.

In what remains of our western empire, especially the Leeward Islands, the black inhabitants, by which they are chiefly occupied, have lately engaged the attention of some faithful servants of Christ; and been considerably evangelized, not by the countenance of government, or the ministry established in the Church, which is in a state of fearful neglect, but by the voluntary zeal of Moravians, and the Wesleyan Methodists. These have nobly devoted themselves to the service of their poor black enslaved brethren, whom no man cared for;

and have succeeded in the call and conversion of many thousands to the faith and love of Jesus Christ. In this honorable service none have more distinguished their philanthropy and fidelity, than the Rev. Dr. Coke, a principal minister among the Methodists.

A new world hath lately been discovered, and explored by British navigators. To one region of which we have already sent out unhappy convicts, and with them the everlasting gospel; for so hath God in his gracious providence ordained, that the first testimony borne in that land of darkness and the shadow of death should be by those faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Marsden. May their labors kindle a flame never to be extinguished! and many of their brethren offer themselves on this self-denying service!

A nobler attempt to evangelize the islands in the vast Pacific Ocean, hath recently been made by a society formed by ministers and others of all denominations, who, agreeing to merge their several peculiarities in the one sacred name of CHRISTIAN, have united without preference of churches or party, to send forth faithful men to preach and teach Jesus Christ among the heathen, and to know nothing but him crucified. By the liberal contributions of individuals, who have formed the *Missionary Society*, a sum of twelve or thirteen thousand pounds was expended in the purchase of a large vessel of three hundred tons, conveying thirty missionaries, with five sisters, wives to the brethren, and two little children; furnished with every thing needful for one or more settlements; and to secure them a favorable reception among the natives. The vessel was navigated by men of God, who had many of them embarked far

love of the cause ; and commanded by that able and singularly excellent man, Capt. Wilson, who had devoted his life and labors to the service freely ; renouncing all reward, but that inestimable one, the conducting so glorious an undertaking. Their first object was to visit Otaheite, and the Society Islands, as most frequented and best known, and if an opening appeared, to leave there our married brethren, and the larger part of our younger laborers ; to proceed to Tongataboo, and the Friendly Islands, and deposite a few brethren to the Marquesas, and if there was a prospect of welcome and success, to make a beginning with two or three of our younger brethren : returning by Otaheite and Tongataboo, to see how our missionaries fared, and to ascertain their safety and hospitable reception among the heathen ; proceeding thence to China, for a cargo of tea, in order to cover by the freight some portion of the expense necessarily incurred, by so long and circuitous a navigation.

The eminent success with which this attempt has been attended is before the public at large in the first Missionary Voyage, than which probably there never was another so singularly favorable. After a course of so many thousand miles, the whole body of missionaries was landed in the places of their several destination, at Otaheite, at Tongataboo, and the Marquesas, in perfect health ; and the ship returned by Canton, with a cargo of tea into the port of London, in about one and twenty months, and brought back every seaman in as good health as she had received them. Not an individual was lost in the passage, no disease ever visited the crew, nor was the least want of any comfort felt during the whole of the voyage. The name of Capt. Wilson, under whose conduct and care the service was accomplished,

will descend with honor and remembrance to the latest posterity.

Encouraged by so promising a beginning, a second equipment was immediately begun, to strengthen the hands of those already settled, and to enlarge the work in other islands. Thirty-nine brethren and sisters, with seven children, cheerfully entered on the service. But it hath pleased God in his mysterious providence to disappoint our expectations, and to exercise our faith and patience. They were captured by a French privateer, as they were entering the harbor of Rio Janiero, and landed at Monte Video, in the Rio Plata. From the French and Spaniards they received the kindest treatment; and after unavailing efforts to repurchase their vessel and proceed, they were permitted to embark for Rio Janiero, and passing from thence to Lisbon, are, with the exception of three or four detained through indisposition, arrived once more among their friends and brethren in safety.

Whatever the final event may be of these endeavors to evangelize the heathen world, whether the great Head of the Church be pleased to crown our labors with success, or in his all-righteous dispensations to frustrate our hopes, the attempt is Christian, is glorious. It is now demonstrated that a mission to those distant and desirable lands is practicable, is easy, and the means within the power of individuals, if zeal for Christ, and love for the souls of men be not wanting. And surely no unforeseen difficulties with which we may have to struggle, or partial disappointments should discourage us from persevering in so great a design, but rather rouse the missionary brethren to renewed and more vigorous exertions.

Advices also from Port Jackson at first produced more distress than even the capture of the *Duff* itself; till on the arrival of dispatches from the missionaries themselves, it was found that though some of them, alarmed with apprehensions for their wives, after they had lived a whole year without any insult or injury, had taken the opportunity of the departure of the *Nautilus*, which had touched at Otaheite, to remove to Port Jackson, seven brethren and one woman refused to quit their station; and we hope are happily laboring to advance the great object of their mission. Nor are those who have departed without some prospect of being made more useful in the place, whither they have migrated, than if they had rested where they were placed. God's providential disposals are all wise, and his work will often be more effectually accomplished, by the steps which we regard as injurious, and tending to the disappointment of the object we have in view. Perfectly sure the mission is of God, and under his peculiar care, we rest in his disposal as ordering all things well; and patiently wait, and quietly hope to see the compleated salvation of our God. It is hoped that soon these faithful and devoted servants of the heathen will be visited and strengthened by men of a like mind, and the seed of eternal life take deeper root, and spread through all the isles of the Pacific Ocean.

These trials of faith abate nothing of our prospects of success, which were never more promising, and more loudly call upon us for active and speedy efforts to repair every loss, and increase our sphere of action. Nothing has happened in the smallest manner to lessen the desirableness of this labor of love, or the facility of its execution. We have given our brethren in the islands our solemn pledge that we will visit them: their claims

upon us are stronger than ever, and as the ability of the Society increases in all its resources, no doubt this will be among their first objects.

But they have not confined their views to one region of the heathen world, however great and promising. They have wished to embrace the habitable globe as far as their means shall be found adequate to their desires. Africa, the seat of servitude, the region of darkness, and the most unexplored of all the continents, has especially attracted the attentions of the Society. Their first efforts were directed through the colony of Sierra Leone, to penetrate into the Fowlah country, and communicate the blessings of the gospel to the interior, through the medium of the surrounding nations. Efforts to this purpose had been made before by the Wesleyan Methodists and the Baptists, and failed rather from the insufficiency of the instruments, than the impracticability of the attempt. Undismayed by these unsuccessful attempts, the London Missionary Society, in conjunction with similar societies at Glasgow and Edinburgh, determined to send out six single brethren, two from each body to make a renewed effort to introduce the gospel there. - The climate however has been found so unfavorable, that this effort also has been, in consequence of death and indisposition, rendered abortive, and only two of the six missionaries remain laboring with acceptance in the colony, without any prospect of passing into the interior country.

A happier issue we trust will attend our mission to the Cape of Good Hope, and the country of the Caffres and Boshemmen, which besides the advantage of a more genial climate, has commenced with more auspicious prospects ; and for which the Lord seemed to have pro-

vided especially suitable instruments in Dr. Vanderkemp and his associates.

Dr. Vanderkemp was a Hollander, a man of talents, and improved understanding, about fifty. He had been bred a physician; had studied a considerable time at Edinburgh, as well as in his native universities; he spoke the English, French and Latin languages; but as is too common with the faculty, he had long embraced the fashionable philosophy, and held the tenets of deism. A singular affliction in his family, occasioned by the sudden death of his wife and child, attended by some very particular impressions of God's spirit, engaged him more deeply and seriously to consider his ways, and review the foundations of his hope, than he had ever yet done. This led him to a careful reperusal of the word of God, and the happy effect was a solid conviction of revealed truth, and real conversion of his heart to God our Saviour.

He resolved from henceforth to devote himself wholly to Christ, and to the service of men's souls, and his heart was particularly led out to desire to communicate the knowledge of salvation, to the poor heathen whom none had cared for. He was for some time in this state of mind without a determined object, till he read of the rise and progress of the London Missionary Society. He immediately communicated to them the desire of his soul to devote himself to the heathen. After proper enquiries into his character and abilities, his offer was embraced with great delight, and he was invited to England, where the interview issued in the most cordial welcome of his services. His native language fitting him peculiarly for the Cape of Good Hope and its vicinity, that was fixed as the place of his destination.

On his return to Holland, to settle his affairs, in order to embark in the missionary service, he took with him and circulated in Dutch, an address from the London Missionary Society to the faithful in his own country. This immediately produced the happiest effects. A society during his stay was formed at Rotterdam, on the same plan with our own. A correspondence opened, and our design was not only highly approved, but immediately seconded by the offer of a Dutch minister to accompany Dr. Vanderkemp, whose name was Richerer; to these two of our brethren were joined, and they embarked on one of our convict ships, the Hillsborough, to be conveyed to their appointed station.

The diligence, zeal, and intrepidity of our brethren among the convicts, amidst the ravages of death and the jail fever, and the blessed effects of their labors on the living and the dying are before the public. They prove the power of the gospel on the most obdurate of mankind. We have just received the pleasing intelligence that on a visit to these miserable beings, after our brethren had been some time at the Cape, they found the spirit of prayer and seriousness still encreasing among them; and in the midst of all their misery, they united to cry unto God for mercy. Our missionary brethren at Port Jackson, will be very providentially placed to cultivate every gracious impression which may remain on their minds at their arrival.

The blessing of the Lord on the labors of these missionaries at the Cape hath been as singular. They have appropriated four evenings in a week to the instruction of the slaves, who attended them in great numbers, and respecting whom Dr. Vanderkemp expresses himself in the strongest terms of confidence, that they have been

baptised with the Holy Ghost, though the regulations established, it seems, at the Cape, forbid them to be admitted to the Christian rite of baptism, an obstruction which assuredly our humane and Christian government will not fail, on application, to remove.

But the most pleasing trait attending this mission is the earnest application from the most savage of all the tribes, the *Bosshemen*, to obtain one of our brethren to teach them the knowledge of the true God. Whilst they were deliberating on the subject, and had determined to decline the service, as likely to interfere with the Caffre mission, for which preparations had been made; three of the Bosshemen chiefs themselves came to the Cape, and cleaving to our brethren, would not leave them, till one of them had promised to accompany them to the Bosshemen nation, whither he has proceeded, we hope, with a companion from the Cape, or one of our Dutch brethren.

A missionary society instituted at the Cape, under the title of the South African Missionary Society, is the first fruits of our brethrens' exertions, and of the address sent from the missionary Society to the inhabitants at the Cape. Their commencement is most auspicious, and the subscription considerable, one lady having given fifteen thousand florins. It manifests that God's spirit is moving on the hearts of men, throughout the whole Christian world, and that the long dormant spirit of zeal begins to be awakened to vigorous exertions, for the Redeemer's glory, and the salvation of the souls of men.

All the preparations were ready for the journey of the missionaries to the Caffres and the Bosshemen, when

the last dispatch was sent: the government most kindly favoring, and the farmers waiting with teams and oxen to convey the brethren to the places of their destination. May this small beginning through the divine benediction, be followed with great increase! Never in our time did Africa seem to open a more promising door of entrance to the heathen. The missionary publications on this subject will be read with thankfulness and delight.

We wished to visit our vast possessions in the East, and to carry the light of the gospel to the Mahomedan and Bramanic sects; but obstacles in our way, before noted, prevented our intentions. One man alone has been employed to gain information of the true state of things on the spot, and to instruct us whether there, or in any of the adjoining nations, such prospects open, as would encourage attempts to evangelize that region of the world. We have heard of his safe arrival.

One solitary laborer also has been dispatched to the little island of Twilingate, near Newfoundland, at the earnest request of the inhabitants, from whom we have received tidings of his welcome and commencement of labors.

These are the actual efforts which have been made, and still greater are in the intention of the society, for which adequate preparations are making. The Sandwich Islands, the Marquesas, and the Society Islands, were to have received a new body of missionaries without delay. The afflictive circumstances which have happened, may for a while retard the purposes of the society: but they continue vigorously active to repair the breach, and provide both persons and provision for

the accomplishment of their original design. The heirs of glory are usually trained up in the school of adversity, and to those who have read the Acts of the Apostles, a series of sufferings and disappointments have been seen to issue in the final success of the gospel; fully persuaded that it is the Lord's work, we look up and go forward. Duty is ours—events are his.

It is a pleasing trait to remark, how cordial an interest the faithful brethren in all lands have taken in these feeble efforts of missionary labor: and how liberally some societies and individuals have transmitted their gifts to our treasury. Correspondents from Sweden, Berlin, Basil, Zurich, Rotterdam, Franckfort, East Friesland, Lusatia, New-York, Connecticut, and other places, have conveyed to us their warmest and most affectionate wishes for our success; united with us in our stated seasons of prayer; and in several places formed associations to promote the same objects, and to provide the means for running the same race of missionary zeal. May He who hath the residue of the spirit, pour it forth more abundantly upon us all!

Our transatlantic brethren profess to turn their attention particularly to the Indian nations, in the interior of that vast continent; and, indeed, a wide field opens from the Alleghany mountains to the shores of the north western coast, which will require their most vigorous efforts. Could we some day so far proceed as to ascend the Columbia river, and form a mission on its banks, it is not out of hope, that the sound should reach the interior, and spread till the undulations on either side meet, and form one concert of praise. Is any thing impossible with God?

But whatever retardments may make the heart sick with hope deferred, or whatever difficulties obstruct the execution of the present efforts, in this or some succeeding generation, the work shall be done with efficacy : for the heathen are given to the Saviour for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. Happy and honored are those, whom he shall deign to employ as instruments in the accomplishment of his glorious designs !

I have collected the chief traits of the latest missionary labors thus summarily together, and highly thankful should I feel, if I shall be able to record the progress of a work so happily begun. No circumstance of the present day bears a more auspicious aspect on the erection and increase of the Church of the living God. Indeed, in this eventful period, it is not a little reviving, amidst all the prevailing desolations and ungodliness around, to see the morning thus spread upon the mountains, and to hope for the rising glories of the sun of righteousness, to renew the face of the earth. The Church of the reformed will, I believe, be the divine and favored instrument in this service, when God the Spirit shall revive his work in the midst of the years ; and I look especially to my native land for this service ; persuaded that we are yet preserved to be the heralds of the everlasting gospel, unto the ends of the earth. :

But I return from the other quarters of the globe to Europe, and the nations of the reformed religion there.

GREAT BRITAIN.

AMONG the chief of the nations, stands this long and greatly favored isle, where, since the gospel was first preached among us, scarcely ever has there been a time, when it more ran and was glorified, than at the present. It is the joy of every faithful heart to look around, and amidst every dark and dreary prospect, to behold a mighty spirit stirred up, to make the name of Immanuel known and glorified in the earth.

It must be acknowledged and deplored, for a great part of this century, that the same declensions from the purity of the faith, and the power of spiritual religion, had marked the Reformed, as well as the Lutheran Church; and our own shared deeply in the general decay. Literature, indeed, never advanced to a higher summit. The commencement of this century has been called the *Augustan age*, when purity of style added the most perfect polish to deep erudition, as well as the *belles lettres*. A Newton, an Addison, need only be mentioned, out of a thousand others, whose works will be admired to the latest posterity; and afford the noblest specimens in the English language. I would conceal, if I could, names of a later date, a Hume, a Gibbon, because, with all their admitted attainments and excellence, their writings contain the concentrated virus of infidelity, couched under the most able faculties, and most engaging style. They are the enemies of my God, but his cross will prevail. This age has been singularly philosophic; big with discoveries in all the hidden recesses of nature; and as pregnant of every abomina-

tion. The pride of wisdom, and the rage of reasoning have summoned revelation to their unhallowed bar, and condemned it. Insensibility to God, and carelessness about a judgement to come, no longer believed or feared, have opened the flood-gates to ungodliness. Infidelity and scepticism, respecting an eternal world, have given importance to the present; and multitudes appear in haste to seize their portion, and to enjoy the gratifications of the beast, while they live, expecting, as the beast, to die. Hence dissipation of every kind has burst in as a flood; and though I know not that our morals are more openly vicious than formerly, the general departure from all religious principle is glaringly evident, in the universal* neglect of all divine ordinances; hardly the decencies of religion or worship continue to be maintained.

In the commencement of this century, the Church was chiefly governed, and filled, by the latitudinarian divines; whose moral writings, however able and ingenious, rendered the peculiar doctrines of the gospel unfashionable; and as they had themselves drank deep into the Arminian tenets, I wonder not to hear the great Archbishop Tillotson declare of the Athanasian creed, that "he wished we were well rid of it." Such, indeed, was the general idea of the age, that it contained articles too trinitarian, too evangelical, and too uncharitable, according to their apprehensions of divine truth. Hence, though all our subscriptions were strongly Calvinistic, and, as Bishop Burnet owns, this is the true and natural sense of the Church and its articles; yet they came to be called *articles of peace*; were to be

* One hardly knows how to reconcile this, with an observation just made. It must be understood in a qualified construction.

interpreted with a considerable *latitude* ; and, in short admitted, in whatever sense men chose to receive them : a supposition so disingenuous, that, though countenanced by general concurrence, it can never alter the nature of the thing, or make it less false and hypocritical, however numerous the body of the heterodox and arminian clergy, and however few the reformed, or Calvinistic. Nothing, indeed, can be farther from truth, than the representation made by Mosheim, that the *Reformed Church* in general; and the *Church of England* in particular, “ receives into its bosom Arminians and Calvinists, Supralapsarians, Sublapsarians, and Universalists, without adhering strictly to creeds and confessions.” The very reverse is the case : the same original creeds and confessions remain unchanged ; nor is it in the power of the Church, or its ministers, to make the least alteration, without an act of Parliament. They must be subscribed *ex animo*, and taken in no other sense *expressly*, than the *literal* and *grammatical*, according to the first institution ; and whoever acts otherwise, betrays the rights of conscience to convenience. That this is frequently, nay, generally done, makes no alteration in the claims of the Church, and only adds to the criminality, by the example of general depravity.

The concealment and neglect of the distinguishing peculiarities of Christianity, as if their defenders themselves were afraid to produce them, gave especial boldness to the infidels ; and as the tolerating genius of the times admitted an uncontrouled liberty of the press, it swarmed with publications of the most pernicious tendency, most congenial with the general corruption of manners, and at the same time most highly conducive to spread the prevailing impiety and profligacy. England, though not singular, ranks among the first in these pro-

ductions. A Collins, a Tindal, a Morgan, and a Chubby, with the still farther advanced in atheism, a Mandeville, a Toland, and a Woolston, improved upon the noble authors of the former age, and opened the doors of the temple of infidelity wider ; as indeed was needful, to admit the crowd that sought to take shelter there, from the threatnings of revealed truth, and the uneasiness of a guilty conscience.

Through the moralists in the pulpit, and the deists in the press, Christianity was reduced to a very emaciated figure. Even the dissenters, who affected greater purity of religion, had drank deep into the general apostacy, and sunk into a worldly, careless spirit. The Presbyterians, especially, diverged into the errors of Arianism ; and as their ministers lost the life of religion in their own souls, their congregations dwindled, and easily entered the vortex of conformity, and got rid of inabilities for the magistracy, and a sort of reproach that repelled them from the circles of fashion. The Independents were few, and little attended to ; though amongst them the sounder doctrines were maintained, but in general too cold, and dead hearted ; and the Baptists hardly had a name. The Quakers, left to their silent meetings, were declining and forgotten ; and the other sects sunk into insignificance.

The old distinction between high and low Church was not yet abolished, though the latitudinarian doctrines, and the new bishops, who had the great weight in the scale, were far predominant ; embraced all protestants as their brethren ; admitted true churches might subsist without episcopacy ; and therefore more cordially received the dissenters, and formed very kind friendships and correspondencies with the ingenuous of every

denomination. But there were bigots who regarded their brethren with abhorrence ; supposed they had neither ministry, nor sacraments, and belonged to no Church : schismatics, and in mortal error. These particularly revived at the latter end of Queen Ann's reign, when the cry, that the Church was in danger, was made a handle to bring in a tory ministry ; AN. 1710. and that contemptible creature, Sacheverel, became of importance. The Queen, more partial to her popish brother, than to the distant Hanover family, and rather wishing the throne to descend to her own blood, encouraged the high Church party, as always most friendly to Popery ; and had her life been prolonged, and the intrigues of the tory ministry successful, another popish King would have been intruded on the nation, and welcomed by the high Church and non-jurors, always partial and attached to the exile family, and necessarily so from their principles of indefeasible right and non-resistance—a glorious Providence once more rescued the land from these traiterous designs. The infidel Bolingbroke, conscious of his correspondences, fled : and the famous Bishop Atterbury was impeached for his detected intrigues with James, the abdicated exile.

AN. 1714. With the House of Brunswick the liberty of the country stood confirmed ; and all who dissented from the Church, satisfied with a liberal toleration, approved themselves faithful friends to the new dynasty : for the distance of relation to the throne made it an act of election, rather than hereditary succession : a kind of parliamentary grant to that House, as Protestants, and nearest in blood ; and as affording the happiest prospects of maintaining the liberties of the country. With this, all the high Church party were greatly dissatisfied, and

employed their utmost power and art to foment repeated rebellions against the House of Brunswick ; but happily their machinations were defeated, and their rebellions quashed, with the punishment due to those who were found engaged in them. As the dissenters approved themselves strong friends to government, they enjoyed favor ; and being excluded from all lucrative preferment in the Church, the prime minister wished to reward them for their loyalty ; and by a retaining fee, preserve them steadfast. A considerable sum therefore was annually lodged with the heads of the great divisions, the Presbyterians, the Independents, and the Baptists, called, *regium donum*, the royal bounty, to be distributed among the more necessitous ministers of their several congregations, according to the discretion of a number of principal ministers of these denominations, with whom this gift was entrusted, and by whom it is annually divided.

The rising prosperity of the nation, with increasing wealth and commerce, as these things usually do, tended to increase the corruption of the kingdom. And morals, though strongly inculcated, woefully decayed. A word, called *patriotism*, was supposed to contain all excellence, and therefore more affected than any thing beside ; though, in fact, a greater solecism cannot be imagined, than an immoral patriot. Between contests for power, thirst for riches, and inordinate love of pleasure, the nation sunk down into corruption, and the Church erected a feeble barrier against the fashionable pursuits. All its great preferments were bestowed to secure friends to administration : whatever prime minister prevailed, the prelatical bench looked up to their creator with devotion and assiduous attention. The life and power of godliness fell to a very low standard ;

only here and there an individual cleaved to the faith once delivered to the saints, and dared to be singular.

AN. 1729. It was in this state of torpor and departure from truth and godliness, that at Oxford, one of our universities, a few, chiefly young men, began to feel the deplorable spiritual ignorance and corruption around them. They were conscious something ought to be done to revive a sense of religion in principle and practice, from the decay into which it was fallen : they were convinced men of God and ministers of the sanctuary, ought to lead very different lives from any thing they observed at college.

John and Charles Wesley, the first, and most distinguished leaders in this revival of evangelical truth, were brothers : the one fellow of Lincoln College, the other student of Christ Church. Their father, a respectable clergyman at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, was of the high Church party, and had educated his sons in his own principles. John, the eldest, took the lead, and at the first appeared vastly disposed to inculcate every rigorous mortification, far beyond the practices of that day, and sometimes approaching the penances of popery.

With these associated a number of other students, whose minds were similarly affected. Mr. Ingham, Mr. Whitfield, and Mr. Harvey, were afterwards particularly distinguished. They all entered into solemn engagements with each other, to lead a stricter life of holiness and self-denial than they had ever yet done, and to separate from every thing unbecoming their character, as Christians or ministers. They agreed to meet frequently together at each other's rooms for prayer and reading the Scripture ; to keep stated times of fasting,

and to receive the communion every Lord's day : they visited the prisons and the sick ; they sought out and relieved distressed objects ; and by these and other particularities, attended by an uncommonly sanctimonious deportment, they rendered themselves very notorious in the University, and acquired the name of METHODISTS.

As they all set out with profession of strict adherence to the Church of England, the distinguishing tenets of her articles and homilies were particularly enforced by them : and as this was utterly unlike the manner of preaching, which then chiefly obtained, they attracted very numerous audiences ; and their lively manner of address, as well as the matter of their discourses, exceedingly struck the hearers with their novelty, as well as importance. They became still more popular, after their return from Georgia, whither zeal for the gospel had carried them. And nothing awakened greater attention to their preaching, than their quitting the universal habit of reading their sermons from a book, without any animation, and addressing extempore discourses to the congregations where they ministered.

The multitudes which followed them were much affected—a great and visible change was produced in the minds of many. The attention paid to these ministers, and the blessing evident on their labors, roused them to increasing vigorous exertions. They were always at their work, preaching wherever they could procure admittance into the churches ; and not a little flattered by the popularity attending their ministrations. They must have been more than men, if they had not been so. Some wild-fire could hardly fail to mingle with the sacred flame—whilst the noise they raised by their preaching was inconceivable.

At first they appeared united in sentiment ; but they had not long labored, before it was evident they differed in the points which have occasioned so much dispute. Mr. Wesley, the father of Methodism, with his brother, and those of his opinion, leaned to the Arminian doctrine—strong against irrevocable decrees, but firmly maintaining *the fall and its consequences, the necessity of justification by faith alone, and the operations of the Holy Ghost*, to produce all righteousness and true holiness : but they taught withal the *universality* of Christ's redemption, and the offering of his body, *alike* for those who are lost, as for those who are saved : and in point of *free-will* they supposed, though still as a gift of grace, that every man had *some* powers of will within the sphere of his own exertion, which first led to conversion—that the benefits of Christ's redemption extended to those who had never heard of his name—that by improving the measure of light and grace within him, every man might be saved—but that no man could be sure of *persevering* in grace : and, that in possibility, notwithstanding what Christ hath done and suffered, *all* might reject the remedy provided, and perish eternally.

Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Harvey, and those who united with them in sentiment, held the articles of the Church in the sense usually termed Calvinistic ; and which an ingenuous enquirer can hardly hesitate to confess was the sense of the compilers. Though in age Mr. Whitfield was younger than the Wesleys, in zeal and labors he had no superior ; his amazing exertions are well known ; and the effects of them were prodigious through the whole land. He confined not his ministry to England—Scotland enjoyed the benefit of his visits, and furnished innumerable evidences of the power with which he spake : nor were his efforts restricted to Brit-

ain, but extended to America ; whither the Mr. Wesleys had first led the way. I mean not to enter on a life so well drawn up by Dr. Gillies. Suffice it to observe, that by the labors of these indefatigable men, a flood of gospel light broke upon the nation. At first they were wholly confined to the Church of England, as their attachment to it by education was strong : and had they been fixed in any settled station, they had not improbably lived and died, good men, useful men, but unnoticed and unknown—a series of providences had designed them for greater and more extensive usefulness. The churches growing unable to contain the crowds which flocked after them, Mr. Whitfield first, at Bristol, 1739. 101, resolved to visit and preach to the wild colliers in the wood, who had seldom attended any worship : and his signal success among *them*, encouraged his persevering efforts. On his return to London, he used the same means of field-preaching, at Kennington Common, and Moorfields, being now generally excluded from the churches ; to which he had himself somewhat contributed, by perhaps too severe animadversions on the clergy, as well as the envy and disgust that his singular popularity had occasioned.

Nor were Mr. John Wesley and his brother Charles less zealously employed, but also took the field, and preached every where. The congregations under the canopy of heaven were prodigious : sometimes, indeed, riotous and insulting, but in general solemn and attentive. By these labors multitudes were daily added to the church of such as should be saved.

Hitherto the principal leaders, though acting independent of each other, had maintained apparent fellowship ; but the difference of their sentiments respecting

the doctrines of predestination and grace, began to awaken unpleasant disputes, which were carried on sometimes with too much asperity. Yet *the corruption of human nature, justification by faith alone, and the necessity of a divine change of heart*, by the power of the Holy Ghost : these fundamental truths, both professed zealously to hold and teach ; nor did the division which followed between them, retard the progress of the work. They parted, indeed, like Paul and Barnabas ; but the extent of the sphere of their usefulness was thereby enlarged. Unable to supply the numberless places and congregations collected by their labors with a regularly ordained ministry, they each associated with themselves lay preachers, the best informed and qualified, whom they could find ; and thus multiplied themselves over the face of the whole land. Their associates increased by thousands, and their ministry was blessed to the great revival of religion wherever they itinerated.

This immense body of Methodists, from the difference of the doctrines each maintained respecting the decrees of God, and free-will, necessarily divided into two separate communions, the *Calvinistic* and *Arminian* ; both of them professed predilection to the Church, and did not at all object to episcopal government as a church order ; but necessitated, from the situation in which they were placed, to preserve the congregations which they had collected and formed into religious societies, the great leaders, Wesley and Whitfield, appointed for their spiritual edification, local and itinerant preachers, to confirm their faith, and increase their numbers : themselves continuing the apostolic plan of itinerancy, and visiting in rotation the churches which their ministry had raised. Men more laborious than those principal persons were, since the apostles' days will hardly be

found. They repeatedly travelled over a space more than the circumference of the globe ; wherever they moved they were as a flame of fire, and left a train of evangelical light behind them. They were in preaching unwearied, two, three, and four times a-day ; and this often in places many miles distant from each other ; and notice having been previously given of their coming, thousands awaited and welcomed them, heard them with reverence, and received them as angels of God. Thus immense congregations were formed through all parts of the kingdom, especially in the great manufacturing towns, among the tin-mines, and the collieries. The aggregate amount of auditors must have been several hundred thousand, as the preachers themselves, in Mr. Wesley's connection alone, in Europe and America, amounted, if I am rightly informed, at one time to about five hundred itinerant, and four thousand local preachers. All these continued occasionally to communicate with the Church of England, their original source ; though they more frequently held communions among themselves ; and received the elements from those ministers of the Church of England, who were in fellowship with the Methodists, or served among them. And on the whole they appeared to give a decided preference to the ordinance, as administered by the Presbyters of the established Church ; but their modes of procedure being charged as irregular, they had every discouragement from the heads of the Church, and no hope of a settlement in it. Hence having erected places of worship of their own, and being no bigots to church government, they by degrees became more seldom occasional communicants in their parish churches, and confined themselves to their own ministers and places of worship. Yet for a long while they were very reluctant to appear to separate from the Church established, and to this day

I apprehend the great body is episcopalian ; and prefer that mode of government in its ancient simplicity, to the presbyterian or independent model.

At the time the Methodists arose, all the various denominations of dissenters from the established Church had suffered a great decline from evangelical principles and real godliness ; and some much more than others, particularly the English Presbyterians. But many being awakened and revived by the labors of the itinerant evangelists, especially those of Mr. Whitfield, a spirit of renewed godliness returned in several congregations, and their stated pastors were roused to greater zeal and activity. The dissenters of all denominations thus evidently profited by the flame originally kindled by the ministers bred in the established Church. From their itinerant and most able helpers, decaying congregations invited pastors to settle over them ; new life was thus infused into the torpid mass. A multitude of churches arose among them, where there had been none before. The Independents especially profited hereby, as most of the newly formed societies preferred the congregational model to the Presbyterian. Not that these pastors were such independents by education or principle, as to have any radical objections, at least many of them, to the forms or order of the established Church, but being excluded by what was branded as Methodism, from any prospect of admittance into the ministry there, they readily consented to preside over the churches which called them to the pastoral office ; and thus also the Baptists as well as the Independents have greatly enlarged their pale by similar accessions.

These itinerant preachers were men of lively and popular talents, and though not bred in the schools of

the prophets, were often endued with great eloquence. Some of the more learned among the dissenters regarded them indeed with a jealous eye, and felt mortified at the preference given to persons neither possessing the knowledge of languages, nor initiated into the mysteries of scientific literature ; but their numerous audiences bespoke the favor of the people. And without the advantages of an education for the ministry, they have not been destitute of excellent gifts for the use of edifying. They were in general men of good natural understanding, well read in the scriptures of their mother tongue, the chief book indeed which they studied. They were experimentally acquainted with the great and fundamental truths of religion ; they possessed a natural faculty of elocution, increased by the habit of frequent preaching. And what seemed infinitely superior to all the rest, they appeared deeply affected with the truths which they delivered ; and as exemplary in their walk and conversation, as laborious in the work of the ministry ; evidently delighting in the service, as their first and best wages.

Whilst these eminent revivers of evangelical truth, Messrs. Wesley and Whitfield, with their associates, were thus proceeding with increasing zeal in their several spheres of usefulness, the great head of the Church was pleased to raise up another singular personage, who contributed exceedingly to enlarge the pale of what was called Methodism, and to strengthen the hands of those who labored in the work of God our Saviour.

The noble and elect LADY HUNTINGDON, had lived in the highest circle of fashion ; by birth a daughter of the House of Shirley, by marriage united with the

Earl of Huntingdon, both bearing the royal arms of England, as descendants from her ancient monarchs.

In very early infancy, when only nine years old, the sight of a corpse about her own age conveying to the grave, engaged her to attend the burial. There the first impressions of deep seriousness about an eternal world laid hold on her conscience : and with many tears, she cried earnestly to God on the spot, that whenever he should be pleased to take her away, he would deliver her from all her fears, and give her a happy departure. She often afterwards visited the grave, and always preserved a lively sense of the affecting scene.

Though no views of evangelical truth had hitherto opened on her mind, yet even during her juvenile days, she frequently retired for prayer, to a particular closet where she should not be observed : and in all her little troubles found relief in pouring out her requests unto God. When she grew up, and was introduced into the world, she continued to pray that she might marry into a serious family. None kept up more of the ancient dignity and decency than the house of Huntingdon.— With the head of that family she accordingly became united. Lady Betty and Lady Margaret Hastings, his Lordship's sisters, were women of singular excellence.

In this high estate she maintained a peculiar seriousness of conduct. Though sometimes at court, and visiting in the higher circles, she took no pleasure in the fashionable follies of the great. In the country she was the lady, bountiful among her neighbors and dependents ; and going still about to establish her own righteousness, she endeavored by prayer and fasting, and alms-deeds,

to commend herself to the favor of the most High and most Holy.

The zealous preachers, who had been branded with the name of Methodists, had now awakened great attention in the land. Lady Margaret Hastings happening to hear them, received the truth as it is in Jesus from their ministry; and was some years after united with the excellent Mr. Ingham, one of the first laborers in this plentiful harvest. Conversing with Lady Margaret one day on this subject, Lady Huntingdon was exceedingly struck with a sentiment she uttered, "that since she had known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, she had been as happy as an angel." To any such sensation of happiness Lady Huntingdon felt that she was as yet an utter stranger.

A dangerous illness having soon after this brought her to the brink of the grave, the fear of death fell terribly upon her, and her conscience was greatly distressed. Hereupon she meditated sending for Bishop Benson, of Gloucester, who had been Lord Huntingdon's tutor, to consult him, and unburden her mind. Just at that time the words of Lady Margaret returned strongly to her recollection, and she felt an earnest desire, renouncing every other hope, to cast herself wholly upon Christ for life and Salvation. She instantly from her bed lifted up her heart to Jesus the Saviour, with this importunate prayer; and immediately all her distress and fear were removed, and she was filled with peace and joy in believing. Her disorder from that moment took a favorable turn; she was restored to perfect health, and what was better, to newness of life. She determined henceforward to present herself to God, as a

living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which she was now convinced was her reasonable service.

On her recovery she sent a kind message to the Messrs. Wesleys, who were then preaching in the neighborhood, that she was one with them in heart, cordially wishing them good speed in the name of the Lord, and assuring them of her determined purpose of living for him, who had died for her.

The change was suddenly wrought on her Ladyship, became observable to all, in the open confession she made of the faith once delivered to the saints, and in the zealous support she began to give to the work of God, amidst all the reproach with which it was attended.

To the noble circle in which Lady Huntingdon moved, such professions and conduct appeared wondrous strange ; but she had set her face as a flint, and refused to be ashamed of Christ and his cross. There were not wanting indeed some who, under the guise of friendship, wished Lord Huntingdon to interpose his authority : but, however he differed from her Ladyship in sentiment, he continued to shew her the same affection and respect. He desired, however, she would oblige him, by conversing with Bishop Benson on the subject, in which she readily acquiesced.

The bishop was accordingly sent for, in order to reason with her Ladyship respecting her opinions and conduct. But she pressed him so hard with articles and homilies ; and so plainly and faithfully urged upon him the awful responsibility of his station under the great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, that his temper was

ruffled; and he rose up in haste to depart, bitterly lamenting, that he had ever laid his hands on George Whitfield, to whom he imputed, though without cause, the change wrought in her Ladyship. She called him back; "My Lord," said she, "mark my words, when you come upon your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacency." It deserves remark, that Bishop Benson, on his dying bed, sent ten guineas to Mr. Whitfield, as a token of his favor and approbation, and begged to be remembered by him in his prayers.

I hope the present venerable Bishop of Worcester will not be displeased if I record a similar instance of his candor lately reported to me. As he preaches frequently, he had observed a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him some little presents. After a while he missed his humble auditor, and meeting him, said, "John, how is it I do not see you in the aisle as usual?" John, with some hesitation replied, "My Lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the Methodists, and I understood their plain words so much better, that I have attended them ever since." The bishop put his hand into his pocket, and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect, "God bless you, and go where you can receive the greatest profit to your soul."

I know no place more proper to preserve another anecdote, which I received from my excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Talbot, of St. Giles, Reading. When Archbishop Secker was laid on his couch with a broken thigh, and sensible of his approaching end, my dear departed friend who had lived in great intimacy with him and received his preferment from him, visited him

at Lambeth. Before they parted, "You will pray with me Talbot," said the Archbishop. Mr. Talbot rose and went to look for a prayer book, "That is not what I want now," said the dying prelate, "kneel down by me, and pray for me in the way I know you are used to do." With which command my dear brother readily complied, and prayed earnestly from his heart for his dying friend, whom he saw no more.

Lady Huntingdon's heart was now truly engaged to God, and she resolved, to her best ability to lay herself out to do good. The poor around her were the natural objects of her attention. These she bountifully relieved in their necessities, visited in sickness, conversed with, and led them to their knees, praying with them and for them. The late Prince of Wales, one day at court, asked a lady of fashion, Lady Charlotte E. where my Lady Huntingdon was, that she so seldom visited the circle. Lady Charlotte, replied with a sneer, "I suppose praying with her beggars." The Prince shook his head, and said, "Lady Charlotte, when I am dying, I think I shall be happy to seize the skirt of Lady Huntingdon's mantle, to lift me up with her to Heaven."

During my Lord Huntingdon's life she warmly espoused the cause of God and truth, though her means of usefulness were necessarily circumscribed, and her family engagements occupied much of her time and attention. On his demise she was left the entire management of her children, and of their fortunes, which she improved with the greatest fidelity. Become her own mistress, she resolved to devote herself wholly to the service of Christ, and the souls redeemed by his blood. Her zealous heart embraced cordially all whom she esteemed real Christians, whatever their denomination or

opinions might be, but being herself in sentiment more congenial with Mr. Whitfield, than the Mr. Welleys, she favored those especially who were the ministers of the Calvinistic persuasion, according to the literal sense of the articles of the Church of England. And with an intention of giving them a greater scene of usefulness, she opened her house in Park-street, for the preaching of the gospel, supposing as a peeress of the realm, that she had an indisputable right to employ as her family chaplains, those ministers of the Church whom she patronised. On the week days her kitchen was filled with the poor of the flock, for whom she provided instruction; and on the Lord's-day the great and noble were invited to spend the evening in her drawing-room, where Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Jones, and other ministers of Christ, addressed to them faithfully all the words of this life, and were heard with apparently deep and serious attention.

Lady Huntingdon now became the open and avowed patroness of all the zealous ministers of Christ, especially of those who were suffering for the testimony of Jesus. Mr. Romaine, on his being turned out of St. George's Church, received particular tokens of her favor; and though till then unknown to her, I was honored with her expressions of kindness and approbation, when, as yet a young man, I suffered such persecution from Bishop Hume, and the University of Oxford, and was so unjustly dispossessed of my cure in that city; without a charge, except that I endeavored to fill it with the knowledge of the doctrine of my crucified Lord, which was construed as an intention of bringing this man's blood upon them. All the parties concerned in these transactions are gone into their graves, and whilst I record them I am ready to touch my last

hour. I can with joy look forward to the day of my Lord ; he knoweth the simplicity and godly sincerity with which I then acted.

The limits to which I am restricted forbid my descending into a variety of particulars, that I may advert to the subsequent steps taken by this venerable woman, more immediately and extensively to spread the knowledge of salvation, and to restore the desolations of that Church, which is the great object of this history.

The illness of her younger son, which proved fatal, had led her to Brighthelmston, for the sake of sea-bathing. There her active spirit having produced some awakening among the people, she erected a little chapel contiguous to her house, that the gospel might be preached to them. This was the first fruits of her great increase : it was enlarged, and that not sufficing to contain the congregation, it was a third time taken down and rebuilt. Many can say they were born there. The success attending this first effort encouraged greater. Bath, the resort of fashion, beheld an elegant and commodious place of worship raised by the same liberal hand. Oathall, Bretby, and various other places, received the gospel by her means. At first she confined herself to the ministers of the established Church, as her preachers, many of whom obeyed her invitation, and labored in the places where she resided : but her zeal enlarging with her success, and a great variety of persons throughout the kingdom begging her assistance, in London, and many of the most populous cities, she set up the standard of the gospel, and purchased, built, or hired, chapels vast and commodious, for the performance of divine service. As these multiplied exceedingly, through England, Ireland and Wales, the ministers

who had before labored for her Ladyship, were unequal to the task ; and some unwilling to move in a sphere so extensive, and which began to be branded as irregular, and to meet great opposition : yet many persevered in their cordial services, when summoned to the work, and were content to bear the cross. As the work greatly enlarged beyond her power to supply the chapels with regular ministers, Lady Huntingdon resolved to employ the same methods as Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitfield had pursued with so much success before. She invited laymen of piety and abilities, to exhort and keep up the congregations she had established.

In order to provide proper persons for the work, she now retired into Wales, where she erected a college for training up young men to the ministry. From thence she dispatched the requisite supplies for the increased congregations under her patronage ; and as the calls were often urgent, her students were too frequently thrust forth into the harvest, before they had made any considerable proficiency in the languages, or sacred literature, in which it had been her intention they should be instructed. Few of them knew much more than their native tongue, yet being men of strong sense, and real devotedness to God, their ministry was very greatly blessed, and the accounts of their success animated her to greater exertions. They were itinerant—moved from congregation to congregation in a rotation established ; and her correspondence with them to regulate and provide a constant supply, was a labour to which her active spirit alone was equal.

Many of these sought a settlement, either in the Church or among the dissenters in preference to a life of intimacy ; and as they were under no bonds but that

of choice, they often quitted her connection. I think not less than fifty are now laboring in the Church, or among the dissenters, with benediction. Their places were always supplied; and others offered to fill the ranks, as death, or retirement from the service, thinned their numbers.

Though Lady Huntingdon devoted the whole of her substance to the gospel, yet it is not a little surprising, how her income sufficed for the immensity of expence in which she was necessarily involved. Her jointer was no more than twelve hundred pounds a-year; and only after the death of her son, a few years preceeding her own, she received the addition of another thousand. She often involved herself in expences for building chapels, which she found it burthensome to discharge. But the Lord brought her always honorably through her engagements, and provided a supply when her own was exhausted.

To the age of fourscore and upwards, she maintained all the vigor of youth; and though in her latter years the contraction of her throat reduced her almost wholly to a liquid diet, her spirits never seemed to fail her; and to the last days of her life, her active mind was planning still greater and more extensive schemes of usefulness, for the universal spread of the gospel of Christ.

Lady Huntingdon was rather above the middle size. Her presence noble and commanding respect; her address singularly engaging; her intelligence acute: her diligence indefatigable; and the constant labor of her thought and correspondence inconceivable. Never was creature apparently more dead to all self-indulgence, or

more liberally disposed to supply the calls of the gospel. I believe, during the many years I was honored with her friendship, she often possessed no more than the gown she wore. I have often said, she was one of the poor who lived on her own bounty ; but her most distinguishing excellence was, the fervent zeal which always burned in her bosom, to make known the gospel of the grace of God : which no disappointments quenched, no labors slackened, no opposition discouraged, no progress of years abated : it flamed strongest in her latest moments. The world has seldom seen such a character—thousands and tens of thousands will have reason, living and dying, to bless her memory, as having been the happy instrument of bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light ; and multitudes saved by her instrumentality, have met her in the regions of glory, to rejoice together in the presence of God and of the Lamb.

But it may be said, was she a perfect character ? No. This is not the lot of mortals on this side the grave. When the moon walketh in her brightness her shadows are most visible.

Lady Huntingdon was in her temper warm and sanguine—her predilections for some and her prejudices against others, were sometimes too hastily adopted—and by these she was led to form conclusions not always correspondent with truth and wisdom.

The success attending her efforts, seemed to impress her mind with a persuasion, that a particular benediction would rest on whomsoever she should send forth ; and rendered her choice not always judicious : though seldom were there ever less offences in so extended a work.

She had so long directed the procedures of her connection, that she too seldom asked the advice of the judicious ministers who labored with her ; and bore not passively contradiction.

I am the historian of truth, as far as I know it. She needs no posthumous fame to blazon her worth ; and she is past far beyond all human censure which can affect her. The great head of the Church hath, I have full confidence, decided her character, pitied her infirmities, pardoned her iniquities, and welcomed her to glory, with well done good, and faithful servant.*

At her death, Lady Huntingdon left her chapels to trustees and executors, for the continuance of the same plan ; which they have pursued with some measure of the same disinterested zeal, and with increasing success. Not less than an hundred thousand persons continue to have the gospel preached to them, by their means. The same steps are pursued in England, Wales, and



* I insert the following anecdotes, not unworthy preservation. The famous infidel, Lord Bolingbroke, in conference one day with her Ladyship, addressed her, " My Lady, when you please to command my pen, it shall be drawn in your service, and admitting the Bible to be true, I shall have little apprehension of maintaining the doctrines of predestination and grace, against all your revilers."

My Lord Huntigdon, her son, unhappily was a disciple of the infidel school, yet, however opposite to her Ladyship in sentiments, he highly revered his venerable mother. A great prelate one day in conversation said, " I wish, my Lord, you would speak to Lady H. She has just erected a preaching place close to my palace wall." " Gladly," says his Lordship, but will you do me the favor to inform me what to urge, for *my mother really believes the Bible.*" [Author's Note.]

Ireland ; and though the property left by her Ladyship for carrying on the work of God, was basely seized at her death by the Americans of Georgia and Carolina, where it lay ; and her assets in England, her chapels excepted, were found not sufficient for her engagements ; yet, however unable to recover her estates, all claims have been discharged ; and the chapels, according to her will, maintained with less incumbrances than at her decease.

The seminary at Wales ceased at her Ladyship's death, the lease being just expired, and no endowment left, her income dying with her : but a new college, on a plan more promising for literature, has been established at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, near London ; and under the superintending care of trustees appointed for that purpose. A number of students have been already educated there, and many are gone forth, now preaching the gospel with much acceptance, from this seminary. It cannot, indeed, be supposed, that in the course of three or four years, the term allotted for their education, much scientific attainments can be made ; yet we have the pleasure of finding by experience, that in this time diligently improved, a competent knowledge of the sacred languages may be obtained : and what is more important and desirable, by the constant exercise of speaking before the president, students, and others, a facility and propriety of address is acquired, highly desirable for them in their future ministrations. Into this seminary none are admitted, but after strict enquiries of their characters, and repeated examination into their Christian experience, and natural abilities. They are required to bring recommendations, and authentic testimonials, from the ministers and others with whom they have been accustomed to worship. They are not received too young, nor much advanced in life ; usually

between the age of twenty and thirty. They are expected to give the most satisfactory account of their own real conversion to God, and of the reasons which engage them to devote themselves to the ministry. They must appear possessed of acute, or at least of promising faculties for improvement. And as the greatest attention is paid to their education, and the disposition with which they are admitted, secures the most unremitting application to study, their improvement hath been hitherto remarkably rapid, considering the necessity of beginning in most instances with the first rudiments of grammar in each of the languages.

This institution promises the greatest utility. The education and maintenance of the students is entirely free: and at the expiration of the term of their studies, when they have been examined, and judged fit to proceed to the ministry, they are under no restrictions, but may apply for admission into the established Church, or any other denomination of Christians. If Christ be but preached, the end of our seminary is answered.

Thus, among those who bear the name of Methodists, there are three distinct bodies, the features of which are very discriminating. Indeed, like the term *Pietist*, the name of *Methodist* is often applied to serious persons, who have no connection immediately with the societies of Mr. Wesley or Mr. Whitfield, or the successors of Lady Huntingdon. But each of these, though denominated by the general name of *Methodists*, has a discipline and regulations peculiar to themselves: these I shall cursorily remark.

1. The body of Arminian Methodists, who derive their name and order from Mr. Wesley, pursue the

plan laid down by him. During his life, such was his personal influence, that it rendered his recommendations the general rule of their society ; so that all his people, throughout the British dominions, to which also America might be added, looked up to him as their president and director. His time was spent in one continued voyage or journey, visiting regularly every society in the vast circle of his connection, and usually preaching every day, and frequently twice or thrice. He accustomed all his congregations to his plan of itinerancy and a frequent change of ministers. A general conference annually fixed the stations of the preachers, and settled two or three within a certain district, round which they moved in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, generally preaching somewhere every evening, and holding societies for prayer and mutual exhortation. All who joined in these, contributed a small sum weekly for the support of the general work, which stewards appointed, regularly accounted for. By this a provision was made for the maintenance of the preachers, according to the number of their families, or occasional necessities. The profits arising from publications, circulated from a press of their own, very considerably increase this fund for the support of their cause. Sometimes the stay of the preachers in their rounds is continued for more than one year, but this is fixed at the general conference. The same steps have been pursued since Mr. Wesley's death : they admit no president, but a few of the most able preachers sway their deliberations. On the whole, considering the nature of such a body, united merely by voluntary association, it is amazing that more disputes and divisions have not arisen. Their zeal, their activity, and usefulness, continue undiminished. America, and the Leeward Islands have been greatly benefited by their la-

bors, as well as the several parts of the British dominions in Europe ; and the impulse given to this great machine, is continued in the same line of direction by those who sit in the annual conference. For some time past they have had an ordination among themselves, and now the people generally communicate with their own teachers : their connection with the established Church is hereby greatly weakened ; and it will probably issue in a compleat separation, not from any aversion to episcopal government, but from despair of procuring episcopal ordination for the pastors whom they have chosen.

2. The followers of Mr. Whitfield are, in the aggregate, a body nearly as numerous as the former, but not so compact and united. Their principles being Calvinistic, recommended them especially to the various denominations of dissenters, and to those of the reformed religion in Scotland and abroad. A great number of these joined Mr. Whitfield, as well as multitudes, who left the established Church. These were formed into congregations in divers places, who, though considering themselves as one body, have not the same union and interchange as the followers of Mr. Wesley. The first and principal of the churches, at Tottenham-court, observes the Church ceremonies and liturgy, the others use in general free prayer. Yet these consider themselves not as distinct independent churches, but formed under a fœderal connection : and some of these have no stated pastor, but are supplied by a rotation of ministers. They have an ordination among themselves ; and where there is a stationary ministry, they still hold connection with each other, and come up as invited or called upon to the greater congregations, for a fixed space according to an appointed routine. All these places of worship are supported, not like Mr. Wesley's,

by a general fund ; but the expenses of the meeting, and salaries of ministers, are provided by the several congregations, and collected and expended in each by stewards chosen out of the principal people. The great chapels, in London, are managed by trustees, who were first appointed by Mr. Whitfield himself ; and on their several demises, have most faithfully and disinterestedly devolved the trust on others ; men hitherto above suspicion, and themselves the most liberal supporters of the cause entrusted to their care : and thus so far from diminishing since Mr. Whitfield's death, the numbers who have joined them are vastly increased. They are every day growing more into bodies of real dissenters, and losing the attachment to the Church, which was at first strongly preserved. Yet they continue very different from the independents, whom they most resemble, in a variety of particulars—respecting itinerancy, church government, change of ministers, and mutual and more open communion. These congregations are very numerous, and very seriously attended. No where is the life of godliness more apparently preserved. The lay preachers, however, are comparatively become few, the most having been ordained among themselves ; and the body is not governed by a general conference, nor the work supported by a common stock : but each congregation provides for its own expenses. Some chapels around London depend for their supplies of preachers, to be furnished from the great bodies in the metropolis. The richer congregations are always ready to assist the poorer in building or enlarging places of worship, and in helping a recent and weaker society, till they become sufficiently numerous, and able to defray their own expenses.

3. As the countess of Huntingdon left all her numerous chapels in the hands of devisees, they pursue exact.

ly the same method of procedure as she did. A number of ministers of the established Church, and especially from Wales, where she long resided, continue to supply in rotation the larger chapels of her erection; and those who were her students in her college in Wales, or have since been educated at Cheshunt, with others approved and chosen for the work are dispersed through Great Britain and Ireland. All these ministers serve in *succession*; not depending upon the congregations in which they minister for their support, but on the trustees, under whose direction they move. Every congregation furnishes a stipulated maintenance to the minister during his residence among them, and his travelling expenses: but in no congregation do they remain as settled pastors, but expect a successor, as soon as the time affixed for their stay is completed. Nor can any of the congregations dismiss the person resident, or procure a change, but by application to the trustees, such being the conditions on which they engage to supply them with a succession of ministers. If any minister is peculiarly useful, and request is made that his stay may be prolonged, it is usually complied with; nay, sometimes at the desire of the people he is allowed to settle among them, liable however to a call of two or three months annually, to be employed in the work at large. And if any minister is not acceptable, or his ministry beneficial, his stay is shortened, and he is removed to another station. Two rules are established and known: (1.) That if any person leaves the connection, to which he has no tie, but choice, he is admitted into it no more: Though the trustees as cordially rejoice in his usefulness in another denomination of Christians, as in their own. (2.) It is also constantly enforced, that if any man departs from the Calvinistic articles of the Church of England, or incurs reproach by any accusation of immorality, he

is summoned to exculpate himself before the trustees, and heard with all candor ; but if the fact be established, he is dismissed, without any possibility of being ever again admitted to minister in any of their congregations. The bent of these congregations is strongly to the established Church. Her liturgy is used in public worship in all the principal chapels. Ministers of the establishment, such is the lenity of the times serve without interruption. Indeed, all persecution for religious differences is become so opposite to the spirit of the nation, that these things usually pass without censure. Probably the bishops themselves wish not to alienate large bodies of the most active and exemplary Christians, farther from the Church by useless irritation.

It is observable, that all these great bodies, though driven to worship in places of their own erection, in order to secure the preaching of such evangelical principles, as they cannot find in the churches in general, would be happy to have the cause removed, that hath compelled them to these expedients : and were the bishops and clergy zealous to inculcate the great fundamentals of gospel truth, and to adorn the doctrine by a life of spiritual religion, the greater part of these partial seceders would probably return to the forms and worship of the established Church. As it is, their numbers every day increase ; and whilst carelessness and lukewarmness cause the noblest edifices to be deserted, every little meeting is crowded with hearers, wherever a minister, earnest and evangelical, labors from his heart, for the salvation of men's souls.*

* An awful proof of this I very lately received from a clergyman, on whose veracity I can fully depend. He had preached in the morning, where the lecturer of one of the noblest churches in

Such has been the progress of what is called *Methodism* in the greater bodies, that more immediately bear that name : but it hath spread in a prodigious manner, both among those of the church as well as the dissenters from it ; and has been the means of rekindling the zeal of very many, so as to produce a vast alteration for the better in the conduct of thousands and tens of thousands. Predilection for the establishment, strongly attaches many to it, who have received their religious impressions from one or the other of these Methodist societies, or from some of their own clergy, who lye under the imputation of being *methodistically inclined*, that is, such as *literally* and with *apparent zeal* inculcate the doctrinal articles they have subscribed, and live in a state of greater piety and separation from the world, than the generality of their brethren. The number of these is of



the heart of the city of London read prayers, and being indisposed, he expressed a wish, that he could get his lectureship supplied that afternoon. My friend humanely offered his services, and the lecturer begged him to be punctual at three. After a walk of two miles, he entered the Church a few minutes before the time, and was surprised not to perceive an individual in the church, except the boy who was tolling the bell with the surplice on his arm. He went into the vestry, and was but just sat down, when a man in black opened the door, and walking up addressed him with a very consequential air—" Pray, Sir, who may you be ?" " Who am I ?"—such a one—and come to preach for your lecturer this afternoon." " There was no body here last Sunday," said this important personage, as the clock struck, "and I see no body today." Upon which, taking up his hat, he stalked off with dignity, saying, ' Let us depart in peace,' and left the clergyman overwhelmed with indignation and astonishment. These things ought not so to be. On the Lord's day—in the midst of the city of London—in one of its most beautiful churches—not an individual attended for two successive sabbaths. There must be a cause for effects so awful. [Author's Note.]

late amazingly increased. Where before scarcely a man of this stamp could be found, some hundreds, as rectors or curates in the established Church, inculcate the doctrines which are branded with methodism; and every where, throughout the kingdom, one or more, and sometimes several, are to be found within the compass of a few miles, who approve themselves faithful laborers in the Lord's vineyard. They naturally associate among themselves, separate from the corruption which is in the world. Every where they carry the stamp of peculiarity, and are marked by their brethren. Though carefully conforming to established rules, and strictly regular, they are every where objects of reproach, because their conduct cannot but reflect on those who choose not to follow such examples. They pay conscientious attention to the souls of their parishioners; converse with them on spiritual subjects, wherever they visit; encourage prayer and praise in the several families under their care; often meet them for these purposes and engage them to meet and edify one another. Their exemplary conversation procures them reverence from the poor of the flock, as their faithful rebukes often bring upon them the displeasure of the worldling, the dissipated and the careless. They join in none of the fashionable amusements of the age, frequent not the theatres, or scenes of dissipation, court no favor of the great, or human respects; their time and services are better employed in the more important labors of the ministry, preaching the word in season, out of season, and counting their work their best wages. They labor, indeed, under many discouragements. All the superior orders of the clergy shun their society. They have been often treated by their diocesans with much insolence and oppression. They can number no bishop, nor scarcely a dignitary among them. Yet their

number, strength, and respectability, continue increasing. May they grow into an host, like the host of God.

By the labors of these most excellent men the congregations of Methodists and dissenters are greatly enlarged ; and though during their lives and incumbency, they fill their churches, and diminish the number of separatists ; yet on their death or removal, they unintentionally add all the most serious part of their flocks to their brethren who are of a like spirit. For when the people have lost their good clergyman, and having no choice of a successor, find a man placed over them of an utterly different temper and conduct ; in doctrine erroneous, as in his life unexemplary ; they are naturally driven to seek the same means of edification to which they have been accustomed, and which God hath given them the grace to know how truly to appreciate : as they have no such attachment to church walls, as to be confined to them, where Ichabod is written thereon. When therefore they can hear nothing truly edifying from their parish minister, they search out some Methodist chapel, or dissenting meeting, where the evangelical and reformed doctrines are taught, and where a people like themselves worshiping God in spirit, assemble for mutual edification ; and if they can find no such, they raise one ; associating among themselves and appointing the most zealous and best informed to edify them : or making application for such to some one of the bodies of Methodists or Dissenters.

It is a pleasing feature of the present day, that the spirit of toleration and candor appears of late more diffused, and persecution discountenanced, though not utterly discontinued. During the first struggles of Meth-

odism, many harsh and severe measures were taken, and wicked or prejudiced magistrates pushed the penal laws against sectaries to the extreme. Of late they have almost wholly slept, and those who were formerly despised and hated, at present are under a less odium from their profession, and more respected by their brethren. Their numbers have given them consequence in the national scale. The perilous times have engaged the chief attention of their countrymen. It is not a day to discourage religion, when impiety and infidelity are come in like a flood. Every government must perceive, that those citizens are most valuable, whose obedience and peaceableness are strengthened by religious principles.

The state of real godliness among us in general, has for some time past certainly been on the increase. The clergy in the Church, many of them at least, have been engaged to change the strain of moral preaching, for more frequent notice of the orthodox principles of Christ's divinity and atonement, and the necessity of true holiness. But it must be confessed that even truth itself freezes upon the lips of those whose heart is not inflamed with the love of it; and who do not feel for others' souls by having felt the importance of seeking the salvation of their own.

The orthodox dissenters maintain a respectable profession. The Arian and Socinian congregations, which a few men of learning and philosophic attainments sought to support, have dwindled almost to nothing; and the only large and zealous bodies are those in which the ancient reformed doctrines are maintained with all their vigor, and this chiefly by ministers, who derive their birth from one or other of the great Methodist societies.

To this source also are chiefly to be traced the zealous and successful efforts made of late by the *Missionary Society*, which hath been already mentioned, to send the gospel among the heathen. And it may justly be reckoned among the singular and happy effects, which have already resulted from this attempt to evangelize the lands of darkness and despair, that such an endeared union and cordiality hath been restored among the various denominations of Christians, who had so long stood in a state of repulsion from each other. They have now agreed to sacrifice educational prejudices, and narrow bigotry, on the altar of Christian love. English and Scots, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Methodists and Independents, have united in the great object of a heathen mission, and solemnly pledged themselves to each other, that neither politics, nor our different peculiarities shall mingle with the gospel truth, which we desire to impart to the nations, but that all who go on this self-denying service shall have but one injunction from us to preach and teach Jesus Christ in primitive simplicity ; prescribing no exclusive church order, or form of discipline ; but wishing every man to maintain true communion with his brethren, and whenever success shall crown their labors, and congregations be formed among our black, or brown, or olive colored brethren, to avoid as much as possible all disputes about matters non-essential, to follow to the best of their judgments, the scriptural model of the Gospel Church ; and to maintain carefully among themselves, the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Nor hath this noble attempt failed to attract the notice of our foreign brethren, whose correspondence hath testified their high delight at our commencements, who are praying for its abundant success, and in America, and on the Continent have been roused up to similar exertions, and are pre-

paring to run the same race with us, where emulation is laudable, and ambition to excel a truly Christian grace.

The Missionary Society hath also produced the happiest effects at home. Many of its members have begun to exert themselves vigorously to spread the evangelical doctrines in their various neighborhoods. Different itinerant societies have been established, in order to send instruction to the poor in the villages where the gospel is not preached ; to open schools for their children ; to converse with the ignorant, and visit the sick ; and many congregations every Lord's day, send out some of their most zealous and intelligent members for these gracious purposes. By this means much attention hath been awakened in the souls of many, and promising appearances give good hope through grace, that this labor of love will not be in vain in the Lord. Probably not less than five hundred places for divine worship have been opened within the last three years.

Many of the episcopal clergy and others of sound principles, and faithful hearts, who for reasons apparently to them justifiable, had withheld themselves from the more enlarged society for missions, composed of all denominations, have felt themselves either reproved or excited to make some similar efforts among their brethren ; confining themselves exclusively to the dominant profession. Their society is yet in embryo, but it will not want encouragement ; and all who have the good of souls at heart must therein rejoice, if the gospel of Christ be more diffusively spread. Their success will gladden our hearts, and the more enlarged and vigorous their efforts, the more shall they be praised.

It would be truly happy if these movements on every side engaged the attention of the two long establish-

ed societies among us, for *propagating the Gospel in foreign parts*, and for *promoting Christian knowledge*. Their funds are immense, and adequate to any undertaking. It is to be lamented that those, who have been chosen by them hitherto, have too often been selected with so little regard to missionary talents; and that their vast revenues have not answered any very considerably useful purpose; at least none such as might have been hoped, if their choice had been more judicious, and the plans for promoting the gospel more vigorously pursued. Should a happy turn be given to these societies, and men of God arise, and be patronised by them, as they have all the countenance and help of government to forward their efforts, it is impossible to say what a door of entrance might be opened to the Gentiles, in the yet unexplored, and unattempted regions of the world; especially in New Holland; the isles of the Pacific Ocean; the northern parts of America; and above all, in the immense regions of Africa, still to us a *terra incognita*. A glorious scene! but I fear a blessing rather to be hoped than realised in my day, now drawing to its evening.

I am seeking the spiritual Church of Christ, and I am filled with comfort at the spread of the gospel in our land. Multitudes in the *established Church*, ministers and people, are blessed monuments of redeeming love. Multitudes of *every denomination* stand high in faithful and vigorous exertions for the glory of our common Lord. I am sure he will say, I have much people in this place. And amidst all our miseries, which are not few, and our prospects, which, as a nation, have been abundantly discouraging, this is the great sheet anchor of hope to every real believer. If the Lord had

meant to destroy us, he would not have shewed us, as Manoah's wife observed, such and such things.

It is true we have liberally partaken of the fashionable philosophy, and among the wise, the mighty, and the noble, the empire of scepticism is widely extended, and faith despised as fable. It hath descended to the menial servant behind the chair, and to the drayman, who can blaspheme and deride religion. But against this enemy that cometh in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord continues to lift up the standard of his gospel, and many are not ashamed to fight manfully under the banner of the cross. Indeed the mode of the contest is changed : It is not now between true religion and false religion, but between true religion and no religion.

Before I quit this subject, it may be worth a moment's attention, to sketch a portrait of the two great characters who eminently contributed to this revival of religion among us. As both favored me with their cordial regard, and though more in unison with the one than the other, I have ever desired to give honor to whom honor is due, and hope never to be ashamed of the friendship of JOHN WESLEY.

JOHN WESLEY was of the inferior size, his visage marked with intelligence, singularly neat and plain in his dress ; a little cast in his eye, observable on particular occasions ; upright, graceful, and remarkably active. His understanding, naturally excellent and acute, was highly stored with the attainments of literature : and he possessed a fund of anecdote and history, that rendered his company as entertaining as instructive. His mode of address in public was chaste and solemn, though not illumined with those coruscations of elo-

quence which marked, if I may use that expression, the discourses of his rival George Whitfield ; but there was a divine simplicity, a zeal, a venerableness in his manner, which commanded attention, and never forsook him in his latest years ; when at fourscore he retained all the freshness of vigorous old age. His health was remarkably preserved amidst a scene of labor and perpetual exertions of mind and body, to which few have been equal. Never man possessed greater personal influence over the people connected with him. Nor was it an easy task to direct so vast a machine, where amidst so many hundred wheels in motion, some moved eccentrically, and hardly yielded to the impulse of the main-spring. I need not speak of the exemplariness of his life, too many eyes were upon him to admit of his halting ; nor could his weight have been maintained a moment longer, than the fullest conviction impressed his people, that he was an eminently favored saint of God, and as distinguished for his holy walk, as for his vast abilities, indefatigable labor, and singular usefulness.

His enemies reviled him, and would if possible rob him of the meed of well-deserved honor, by imputing to him objects below the prize he had in view. Never was a more disinterested character ; but he was a man, and he must have been more than man, if with the consciousness of his own devotedness, the divine blessing on his labors, and the high admiration, in which he was held by his followers, he had not sometimes thought of himself more highly than he ought to think. We exhibit no faultless monsters. Elias was a man of like passions as ourselves.

His singular situation led him to imagine that the glorious head of the Church favored him with especial in-

terpositions in his behalf, which he was sometimes ready to construe as miraculous.

He yielded a too credulous ear to the reports and pretensions of others, and was thus often the dupe of ignorance and presumption.

He hastily at times advanced, what farther information, or maturer judgment compelled him to retract or soften.

In the article of marriage he acted contrary to the celibacy he professed to recommend; but this change of sentiment and conduct implied nothing criminal, unless it were the precipitancy of his former determination.

His rooted aversion to the doctrines called Calvinistic, might be supposed to proceed from a conscientious apprehension, that they had an unfavorable aspect on the practice of spiritual religion, however groundless such supposition was in reality, and however evident the contrary effects appeared in those who held them. But his bitterness and asperity towards those who defended them, and his harsh imputations on the God they worshiped, whatever provocations he might plead, were utterly inexcusable.

But above all, that which appeared in Mr. John Wesley, the most censurable part of his conduct, was his very unfair statement of the arguments of his Calvinistic adversaries, which in a man of his acuteness of intellect, will hardly admit the plea of unintentional mistake.

I am called upon to speak the truth, and I do it from my heart, without respect of persons, to the best of my

knowledge. Mr. Wesley is gone to give an account of himself to his proper Judge; by whom I doubt not all his iniquity is pardoned, and his infirmities covered. And now that envy and enmity have been sometime laid asleep in his grave, I rejoice in observing his character rise in general estimation, and most highly respected by those who knew him best. It will now hardly be a question with any man, whether he would not rather have been John Wesley, who died not worth ten pounds, than Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, who so bitterly reviled him.*

GEORGE WHITFIELD was the son of an inn-keeper at Gloucester. From his early youth he had received deep impressions of religion; and he carried with him to the University of Oxford, a seriousness of mind very uncommon. He began his active career, even before he was in orders, visiting the prisons, and instructing the poor. Bishop Benson was so delighted with his early piety, that he ordained him at the age of twenty-one. And his first essay was a striking specimen of his

* I cannot suppress an anecdote respecting that inveterate enemy of Methodists and Moravians. The author of these volumes had been educated under the tuition of that venerable servant of Christ, Samuel Walker, minister of Truro. After studying at Oxford, intending to enter into holy orders, he applied to this bishop, with a testimonial from of the country, signed by this apostolic laborer, Mr. Mitchel, rector of Verrian, and Mr. Penrose vicar of Gluvias; men in the nearest intimacy with Mr. Walker, and clergymen of the first respectability in the diocese; but the bishop refused to countersign the testimonial, as "of men worthy of credit," and assigned as his reason, that this eminent saint of God "PREACHED FAITH WITHOUT WORKS!" It has been long since decided whose works have been found approved before the great Judge of quick and dead. [Author's Note.]

future popularity, being heard with the most uncommon and awakened concern. His person was manly, and grew large, as he advanced in years, his voice remarkably musical, and capable of the most various intonations, with a natural eloquence, too singular not to command the most profound attention. His manner was often highly graceful and oratorial ; and though a cast in his eye, strongly marked, prevented the vivid impression which that organ is peculiarly suited to make, yet no man with such a disadvantage ever looked with stronger sensibility : and after a second hearing the defect was forgotten. Never man possessed a greater command of the human passions or better knew the way to the consciences of his hearers : he had arrows in his quiver, that himself only knew how to sharpen. His literary attainments were moderate, though not defective in the learned languages ; but his thorough acquaintance with the Scripture, and the peculiar art of introducing and illustrating every subject he treated, not only won the ear to listen, but left an impression on the mind never to be effaced. His labors in both hemispheres were immense : his courage undaunted ; his zeal unquenchable ; he fell a martyr to his work. The violence of his exertions often shook his constitution, whilst the more placid Wesley, with equal constancy of preaching, preserved his health to fourscore and upwards, unimpaired. Perhaps no man since the days of St. Paul, not even Luther himself, was ever personally blest to the call, and conversion of so many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, as George Whitefield. The immense collections he made for charitable purposes sharpened the tongue of slander. Time hath affixed the seal of integrity to all his procedures. He was reviled for his unguarded expressions, and some enthusiastic flights ; but he disarmed his enemies by in-

genuous acknowledgments and correction of his mistakes. How a youth surrounded with such a popularity, and conscious of his own powers, was preserved from hatching the old serpent's egg, laid in every human heart, is wonderful. The keen eye of malevolence was upon him ready to seize occasion against him, or to make it : and it is a proof of no inconsiderable excellence, where so many watched for his halting, that amidst the most virulent abuse, so little could be found *justly* to accuse him. They who knew him best must witness, how boldly and unblameably he had his conversation in the world. Indeed he was so taken up with the unwearied labors of his ministry, in preaching, religious exercises, and advice to those who were daily applying to him, that he had sometimes scarcely leisure for necessary food. The very things for which he was abused, he esteemed his glory ; and resolved to spend and be spent in the service of the souls for whom Christ died. But he had his spots, and so hath the sun. He would have himself acknowledged many more than the nearest of his friends, or the bitterest of his enemies could discover. He is now alike beyond censure or commendation. What I remarked in him, I will speak and not be ashamed.

In his preaching he sometimes pushed the ludicrous to the debasement of the dignity of the sacred ministry. He told a story so well, that it seduced him occasionally to pursue a vein of humor, more suited to excite risibility than to awaken seriousness ; though some impressive truth always closed the relation.

The orphan house of Georgia, which he adopted with too partial affection, seems to have engaged him in difficulties and immensity of expense, greater than any utility which ever appeared to be derived from it ; and

the vast collections he made for it, though faithfully applied, gave a handle to the slanders of suspicion.

He too frequently indulged in censures of the clergy, which however just they might be, seemed the effect of resentment, and would rather tend to exasperate than conciliate their attention. Yet it is well known he was remarkably kind spirited, and averse to controversy and its bitterness; and his most intimate friends will bear me witness, that his temper was as amiable and his conversation as singularly cheerful, as his piety was deep and sincere.

On the whole, as a man, as a Christian, as a minister, we shall not, I fear, look upon his like again speedily. After passing through evil report and good report, during more than thirty years of incessant labor, he entered into his rest in America,* which had peculiarly benefited by his visits; Having crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, to preach the everlasting gospel, with the power of the Holy Ghost, sent down from Heaven. Whatever ignorance of his real character, the fault of prejudice, or the insolence of pride may have suggested, the day is coming, when his great and adorable Master will condemn every tongue that hath risen up in judgment against him, and say in the presence of men and angels, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

I have dwelt the longer on these scenes nearer our own homes, as to us more peculiarly interesting, and also, that should these volumes ever engage the attention

* Mr. Whitfield died at Newburyport on the 30th of Sept. 1770, in the 56th year of his age.

of our foreign brethren, the true character of personages may be known, who have by their revilers, and an ungodly world, been so grossly misrepresented. Their record is with the Most High ; and in his presence I speak what I have known, and testify what I have seen without partiality and without hypocrisy.

SCOTLAND.

I must more concisely pass over the state of the *Scottish Church* ; too much like the English, declined from her own first principles and primitive simplicity. Her ministers exalted in all human science and philosophical attainments above their predecessors ; more polished in style and manners ; deeper in mathematics and metaphysics ; but not more evangelical, more zealous, more laborious. No where have more admired authors won the public approbation ; no where have more dangerous and determined infidels appeared to corrupt the principles of the age : and the questions which have of late been discussed in the general assembly, awfully demonstrate how great a body preponderates there, against the advocates for the ancient doctrines, and the faith once delivered to the saints.

As the Scottish Church grew by degrees more and more into a worldly sanctuary, the abuses of patronage, and other things, which grieved and disgusted many of her most excellent pastors, produced divisions. These led to the Presbytery of Relief, the Seceders, the Burghers, and Anti-burghers, the shades of whose differences this history cannot particularize. Yet among those much of the power of real godliness remained. An host arose, with the famed Erskines and their fellows at their

head, who were zealous advocates for the truth as it is in Jesus, and sought to revive the life of religion in their several congregations. Their labors were eminently blessed, and remarkable out-pourings of God's spirit have been recorded in many parts of that vineyard. I shun not to use expressions, which may be branded as enthusiastic by modern divines. I believe the Holy Ghost is yet given.

Truth compels me to say, that among these separatists of various denominations, the greatest zeal to promote the evangelical doctrines hath been displayed, though the established Church hath not ceased to furnish many, very many eminent witnesses for God, not ashamed of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, but daring to be singular, and to bear his reproach. Under their ministry, a numerous and chosen people in the Scottish Kirk, as well as among the dissenters, continue to be reckoned to the Lord for a generation; and proportional to their numbers, the members of the Kirk are generally better informed, and more evangelical in profession, than the people of England. But great and awful declensions from gospel purity must be acknowledged and lamented. The increase of wealth and fashionable manners have not improved their moral system; whilst the love of many hath waxed cold amidst the prevailing taste for science and dissipation.

It is however a pleasing trait, and highly deserving mention in a work of this kind, that none have more cordially come forward in the heathen mission than our brethren in Scotland. The same spirit of charity and conciliation among the truly gracious of different denominations, hath softened down the bitterness of asperity, which had too frequently prevailed; and those have

agreed to unite in labor and worship, who for a long while had been in a state of utter repulsion from each other ; whilst the riches of their liberality have demonstrated how deeply they have the object at heart, of seeking the souls redeemed, in heathen lands, by the blood of the Lamb. Thus hath a body of confessors of evangelical truth, cleaving steadfastly to God, been yet preserved, as exemplary in their lives and labors, as sound in the faith, and able advocates for the ancient reformed doctrines. These, however unfashionable in the eyes of many, continue to be held fast by them as the most sacred deposit, and most inestimable treasure. Scotland, in general, hath shared with England, and like Jesurun, hath waxed fat and kicked. Such is human corruption, that the abounding gifts of Providence too often afford occasion of abuse. How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven ? Yet, when the spiritual Church is the object, North Britain will not be found the least among the thousands of Israel.

A blessed effort has of late been made to revive the spirit of evangelical religion more generally in Scotland, by a Missionary Society instituted for *propagating the Gospel at home*. A number of zealous, well-informed men, have gone about preaching every where, and their labors have been attended with the happiest effects. Many have been roused from the torpor of indifference, many called by their ministry out of darkness into marvellous light. This has awakened the enmity and jealousy of the craftsmen ; and the *General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* hath issued a *pastoral admonition* against these faithful laborers, which breathes a bitterness and asperity, that cannot fail of carrying its own antidote along with it, and holding up most strikingly to the view of every

serious mind, the difference between the revilers and the reviled. Whoever is at the pains to examine facts, and the assertions in this philippic against the promoters of evangelical religion, will find as many falsehoods as lines; so that happily the more it is read, the more essentially it must serve the cause which it was designed to reprobate. Thus does the Lord bring always good out of evil. The wrath of man shall praise him.

IRELAND,

Still unhappily sunk in darkness and the superstitions of popery, and little more adorned with real evangelical knowledge in those who have assumed the name of Protestants, hath long afforded matter of much sorrow to such as looked for the life and power of religion. The same zealous advocates for spiritual godliness, above recorded, have passed from England into that kingdom; and what is called Methodism, hath spread out its branches through many parts of that nation. God has of late also graciously raised up a precious band of the clergy in the established Church, though few indeed in number comparatively, and of small reputation among their fellows, yet are they earnestly endeavoring to revive a spirit of zeal and true Christianity; to make the name of Jesus more precious, and his authority more respected. Many, I trust, by their labors, will, in the day of God, be written among the righteous; and when the Lord shall collect his redeemed, be found to have been born there.

It is to be lamented, that ignorance and popery still spread their thick mists over the bulk of the common people: and that the Protestants maintain but little

more than their name and immortal hatred to popery, the general profession of their fellow-subjects. Some change must shortly take place. The crisis approaches. May the God of all grace give a prosperous issue!

It is with pleasure I record a happy commencement of missionary labors among them, similar to that in Scotland. In Armagh and the province of Ulster, some faithful ministers, affected with the ignorance and desolations around them, associated for spreading the gospel, and resolved to endeavor to rouse their fellows to a deeper sense of religious truth. They invited some brethren from England to go over and labor among them, as itinerants, in the province of Ulster, and they were heard with the most awakened attention. Multitudes of papists attended their ministry in opposition to all the warnings of their priests, and vast congregations assembled wherever these faithful laborers travelled through the province.

A similar association is formed at Dublin, for the same purpose, hoping to diffuse the knowledge of a Saviour's grace among their benighted countrymen, and to turn their minds from the miserable distraction of politics, to the greater concerns of the salvation of immortal souls. May their efforts be crowned with abundant success!

The other branches of the reformed Church in America, and on the Continent of Europe, claim a few additional remarks, and will bring the whole of this period to its close.

THE BRITISH COLONIES,

Once so precious a limb of our political body, one with us in language and religion, but now separated from the parent stock, and flourishing under independent sovereignty, deserve a memorial in the history of the true Church. From the beginning, a number of zealous ministers of the cross have maintained the power of godliness in that vast continent; and in many places singular revivals of the spirit of life have been remarked. Peace, riches, commerce, and increasing prosperity, indeed, had long ago contributed greatly to the introduction of luxury and corruption into the larger cities: and though a remarkable decency of conduct was still generally maintained; the Sabbath honored; and the stage, with its corrupting entertainments, universally prohibited; yet, as many grew more earthly and sensual, profligacy of manners spread and prevailed, and great declensions from the strictness of piety, which formerly distinguished them, were observable. To revive the work, the zealous Methodists, often and many of them crossed the ocean, and preached through all the Continent, as they had done in England, and with the greatest success. Those, who were called by the ministry of Mr. Whitfield, formed congregations of their own, or joined with the Presbyterians and Independents, universally spread over that Continent. The societies of Mr. Wesley were united under him, and more approached the episcopal regimen. Accordingly one of that body, ordained a bishop by the nonjuring bishops, still subsisting in Scotland, continued that form of discipline: and another, I think, sustains the same office by the appointment, or approbation of Mr. Wesley, at his last translat-

lantic visit. The zeal and activity of the Wesleyan Methodists, is highly commendable ;* and they number more than eighty thousand in society, blacks as well as whites, besides a vast body of hearers, who are not received into bands and classes ; the names given to the smaller private associations, into which, both men and women, separately, are distributed. Since the peace, the intercourse has been frequent, and preachers from the conference go over, and cement the union between those abroad, in America, and the Leeward Islands, and those at home. They are said to be in a very flourishing and increasing state.

But the general interests of religion in America have suffered greatly during the intestine broils. The life of a soldier is very inimical to the progress of godliness, and when men are violently agitated with the politics of this world, their minds are too much taken up to attend to the concerns of a better. In the scramble for wealth, power, and eminence, conscience is often warped by convenience ; and actions admitted, inconsistent with the strict piety of a holy conversation. Since the independence of the nation hath been established, a new race of men hath risen up : deeply engaged to enlarge the commerce, wealth, and importance of their republic ; and, like others in such situations, too inattentive to the greater concerns of the world to come. The increase of riches, and unlimited liberty, naturally led to dissipation in the greater cities, and to the establishment of all those fashionable sources of amusement and entertain-

* The Wesleyan influence in this country will be thought by most Calvinistic readers to be much overrated by the Author of this History. It is problematical whether it be not really to the disservice of Christianity,

ment, which had been proscribed by the policy or severity of manners of the former generations. Play-houses are now opened, and furnished with English performers; and public places of pleasure invite the idle and luxurious to spend their evenings together; from which it would be too absurd an idea, to suppose they can return at so late an hour to meet their families in prayer and in praise; practices which formerly obtained almost in every house.

Yet amidst the vast increase of natives, and influx of strangers, many are still found fearing God and working righteousness. Nothing can be more conducive to the best interests of religion, than the perfect and complete toleration of every denomination of Christians, there established as a fundamental law: the state not in the least interfering, nor supporting any dominant profession. As the vast number of episcopalians, settled in many of the provinces, required a bishop, the English bishops consecrated two for America: these, with the bishop from the non-jurors, continue the succession; and as they have no courts spiritual, no chapters, no cathedrals, no provision but the voluntary contributions of the faithful, no where, probably, will there be found of the prelatical corps, men more nearly approaching to primitive episcopacy. It only remains that they should be multiplied and itinerate, to become more conformed to the apostolic model, if they possess but the apostolic spirit.

The most animated life of religion will probably be found in America, as in England among the Methodists, or those who share the reproach of the cross for their zeal and fidelity, and non-conformity to this world. The Moravians have a few precious congregations;

The various denominations of Christians have many among them, who have tasted of the grace of God in truth. At New-York and Connecticut, the late vigorous efforts to promote a heathen mission, demonstrate, that zeal is not extinct among the chief of their ministers and people ; and, that though ungodliness and dissipation are come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord is still raising up faithful witnesses; to lift up a standard against them. America may not improbably yet afford a refuge for Europeans, if our miseries increase ; and receive into its bosom the faithful, in a day of persecution or desolation, which may yet be coming on the European nations.

The visit of a gracious brother from one of the northern colonies, enables me to add a report, as pleasing as authentic, of the present state of religion in his vicinity : and though Boston, and the more commercial towns, have lost much of the life of godliness, and the purity of gospel truth, both among ministers and people, there seems to be a large and increasing body in the different provinces who hold fast the faithful word, and labor to fan the spark of heavenly love and zeal into a brighter flame of genuine Christianity.

No less than one hundred and twenty townships and parishes have experienced a very considerable revival of religion among them, and the progress seems increasing in the middle and northern parts of Connecticut, in many towns of Massachusetts, in some parts of Vermont, and the north-western parts of New-York. In a single parish of these a hundred persons have been added to the number of the communicants in the space of one year : and like promising appearances have arisen in the western states of Pennsylvania and South-Carolina.

The Missionary Society of New-York, has made an effort to send a mission to the Chickasaw Indians ; and the Cherokees have communicated their desire of having faithful laborers among them, to teach them the way of salvation.

Thus an uncommon attention to the great concerns of an eternal world, seems lately to have been awakened, within a very short time, through many parts of this great Continent. The too neglected interests of their heathen Indian neighbors, also have been laid on the hearts of many faithful ones, and societies instituted, and commencing active exertions for spreading the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to the Indians in their vicinity. How vast a field is open for their labors, an eye cast for a moment on the immense interior parts of that vast continent will discover. Where the harvest is so plenteous, may the gracious Lord grant that the laborers may not be few ! but as the Americans have so greatly increased their population, and daily extend their settlements farther and wider, may the glorious light of the gospel of Christ be diffused on every side, and true Christianity attend the progress of civilization, and cultivation through the woods and wilderness of this rising empire.

A summary view of the nations on the Continent, where the reformed religion is professed, must terminate the subject. I shall begin with

GENEVA,

The cradle of the Reformation, and the *Helvetic* body adjacent. The same causes have there been productive

of the same effects. Attachment to the peculiar doctrines of Calvin, Zanchius, and Œcolampadius, has long been greatly weakened by the spread of the Arminian tenets, and by the progress of the new philosophy overturning all religion. The information I receive, misleads me, if through all the Protestant cantons, the greatest decays are not visible. The Lord's day is closed with amusements beyond the others; and those, who descend from the pulpits, partake of them with their flocks. Though a decency and sobriety of manners is yet preserved, the power of evangelical religion is little demonstrated in the ministers, or the people. The arch-infidel Rousseau, with all the strange oddities of the man, by his pleasing style and manner, spread his destructive opinions; and Voltaire, the more crafty and jealous rival of his fame, diffused in all his vicinity, and especially at Geneva, the poison of his scepticism, to which his scenic representations contributed not a little, by attracting the lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God. To him all flocked, who dwelt in the vicinage, and imbibed his abominations; and all who passed that way, from every quarter, were proud to be introduced to the high priest of infidelity, to admire his wit, adopt his ridicule, and be initiated into the mysteries of incredulity. Hence, I doubt, if there remains a single professor, or pastor, at Geneva, who adheres to Calvin, either in principle or practice; but the lowest form of moral essay, and Socinian Christianity prevails. The convulsions, under the name of liberty, have tended greatly to increase the general apostacy, and they are nearly become French in irreligion, as in politics.

Throughout *Switzerland* the same spirit is too prevalent, though not without some happy exceptions from the prevailing infidelity. *Basel* still maintains a pre-

cious body of ministers, and others, associated to maintain and diffuse the principles and practice of the true evangelical religion. Their correspondence with the Missionary Society at London, speaks them men of the same heart and mind; and their exertions to diffuse the knowledge of a crucified Jesus in their vicinity, manifests the spirit of primitive love and zeal that animates them. May their numbers increase, and their labors be more abundantly blessed to the diffusion of light and truth on every side! The fraternization with France, whose armies have overrun the country, and destroyed their constitution, augurs no good to Helvetic liberty and prosperity, any more than to religion. We must wait, however, till the tornado is passed, to see whether its final effects will be destructive or salutary.

FRANCE.

Once distinguished for the purity of the reformed faith, and then, as we have seen, reduced to the greatest extremities, by the bigot persecutor Lewis, continues sunk very low in every religious view. I have mentioned before its declensions, and the cause of them; nor do I hear of any revivals, now that every link of the chain of popery is broken, and every man's bonds loosed. I am rather induced to think, the Protestants themselves have drank as deeply as any others into the infidel philosophy: and, as long ago, they had greatly declined from the purity of doctrine, and the spirituality of religion, the late revolutions have produced no beneficial change; retaining only their immortal hatred of popery, that is now gratified to the uttermost, and none

more cordially help forward the desolation of every ecclesiastic and monastic institution, than the Protestants : but of any zeal in faithful laborers, or of living Christianity among the Protestant professors, I can find little evidence: A few, indeed, sigh over the abominations; and in the south of France a cry is heard for the pure word of God : but the laborers are not found, or compelled to conceal themselves. Every where else, amidst the tumults, conflicts, agitations prevalent, which have engrossed the attention, and seized upon the passions of mankind, little concern remains about any religion at all. The zeal of methodism made some feeble efforts to enter into Normandy and Brittany, whilst the communication was open : but every thing has been in a state so convulsed, and every foreigner liable to such suspicion, that, I apprehend, nothing can yet be done or hoped, till some settlement of the nation, with toleration, shall embolden the zealous attempt, once more, communicating to them the blessings of the everlasting gospel.

HOLLAND.

THE United Provinces have constantly maintained the reformed faith as the national profession ; and with a great similitude to our own, adopt formulas, not really believed ; and profess to receive the decisions of the synod of Dort, whilst in general, I fear, the ministers exhibit more the traits of Episcopius, and our own latitudinarian divines. The love of gold has generally prevailed over the love of godliness in the multitude ; and the philosophic pride of reasoning hath sent forth from their universities, teachers too wise to submit im-

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plicity to the reformed opinions of Calvin, or the creed of Athanasius. Less dissipated, indeed, yet more intent on gain, till the late desolations came upon them, religion in its vital power was too little known a few good men still remained, who taught and preached Jesus Christ. A small body of Moravians, and a larger band of Mennonites, maintained a stricter attention to the worship and service of God ; but in general an icy coldness of devotion, and dull formality, discharged the public weekly services at Church ; and a little family religion, or associations for prayer or praise, were found. French influence, French manners, French government, now afford little prospect of amelioration : unless it be from the hope, that when matters come to the worst, they may mend. The profession of the nation, indeed, remains unchanged ; yet one step has been taken to abolish that, by withdrawing, it is said, the stipends from the ministers of the national establishment. True religion can well subsist without an establishment ; but when the power of godliness is lost, the form of it will quickly follow, when no longer supported by the state. The priest, whom men maintain to pray, will hardly continue his function when his salary ceases.

One happy trait of the revival of the spirit of godliness among them, hath of late appeared. Dr. Vanderkemp, a Dutch missionary, gone with others to the Caffre country, from the London Missionary Society, having visited Holland to settle his affairs dispersed an address from that body, which produced the happiest effects. A considerable number immediately associated for the same missionary purposes at Rotterdam, and continue to pursue with zeal this blessed object.

Another similar society has been recently formed at Aurich, in East Friesland ; and as they are men of a

like spirit with their missionary brethren, we cannot but hope that the most blessed effects will ensue, and faithful men be raised up in the spirit of primitive evangelists, to spread the true gospel of the grace of God, abroad and at home.

The present tempestuous moment, will, it may be hoped, be succeeded by some happy amelioration; and the inhabitants, from the scourge they have suffered, learn righteousness, and return to Him, from whom they have so greatly departed. If such be the event of all their sufferings, the issue will be peace.

GERMANY.

THIS pillar of the reformation and primary beacon of divine light and truth is grievously defaced, and darkness hath again covered the earth. The Calvinists as well as Lutherans have too generally imbibed the principles of the infidel philosophy. Excluding the government of the all-wise and righteous Jehovah, they have placed blind fate upon the throne, and substituted the doctrine of *necessity*, for God's predestination and grace. Scepticism leading to atheism naturally brings up the train of these depths of Satan. The wise above what is written, pride themselves in the acuteness and freedom of their researches, and those who are trained up for the ministry in the universities and seminaries of learning, unless my information misleads me, are early initiated in these anti-christian principles, and commence their career with the purpose of debasing the faith which they are obliged to engage solemnly to maintain; whilst he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And should any man appear zealous for truth, and ex-

hibit traits of holy walking with God, he would infallibly bring on himself a stigma of peculiarity, and render himself alike abnoxious to his teachers and fellow students. Thus educated, and thus ministering, it cannot be expected but that the consequences should follow, which are too evident. And even where more daring blasphemy against the fundamental doctrines of Christianity does not lift up its banner, a state of lifeless torpor and indifference prevails. The forms of religion are hastily and perfunctorily discharged, whilst a life of worldly conformity of scientific pursuits leaves scarce a trace visible of the mind of Christ, and of a conversation in Heaven.

Among all the states and free cities professing the reformed faith, I can procure no information of any remarkable revivals of evangelical truth and spirituality of religion. I cannot however doubt, but that, in many places of that vast country, there are found men of a true heart holding fast the head Christ, who search the Scriptures daily, and, as their confessions and forms of worship are conformable to its dictates, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour, whose cross they bear, by a zeal for the truth as it is in him, and by a conduct formed on the bright model of his own great example. But among ministers and people these happy exceptions are too few, whilst the general body is carried down with the torrent of infidelity and dissipation, worldly pursuits, or science falsely so called.

That God hath not left himself without witnesses, may be concluded from some evangelical associations lately formed, with a view of reviving the work of the Lord in these present evil days : the spirit which breathes in their correspondences witnesses that the vital spark of

genuine Christianity still glows in the bosom of a few, who are waiting for the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and crying to him as his elect, day and night, that he would hasten his work; and kindle such a flame of love and zeal, as all the waters of opposition cannot quench, nor all the floods of false philosophy be able to extinguish.

From the whole of this view of THE REFORMED CHURCH, we may perceive every where, throughout its extent, a chosen generation, a peculiar people, often indeed thinly dispersed, and in some countries apparently declining; in others exhibiting stronger symptoms of vitality, and striving against the evil around them, with some happy success; and with an increasing number of faithful laborers. Nor in any comparative view of the days which are past, can the present be counted inauspicious. I am rather disposed to think and hope, that the end of the eighteenth century hath produced as plentiful a harvest in the gospel field as any of the seasons of revival since the time of the reformation.

In no æra have the doctrines of the gospel been more clearly opened, and by a greater variety of able and faithful men, and probably at no time since the days of the apostles, shall we be able to produce a greater number of Christians, who could give a sounder and more explicit reason of the hope, that is in them, derived from views more purely evangelical; and who walk more closely with God, in righteousness and true holiness.

CONCLUSION.

IN following the Church of Christ through the wilderness of this world, we have beheld scenes highly glorious, and deeply afflictive : the mighty power of the great Head of the Church, preserving it through the fires, and the constant opposition of the god of this world, to disturb its peace, and sully its purity. In all ages the same corrupt nature of man hath seen producing the same effects, in the exercise of proud reasoning, worldly pursuits and sensual enjoyments ; and the influence of divine grace hath appeared in casting down these imaginations, and bringing every thought into the obedience of Christ ; in weaning the affections from this world, and fixing them by realizing views of faith on a better. Thus two sorts of persons figure on the scene, and only two ; the children of God, and the children of the wicked one : the latter always the many the mighty and the wise, the former the few, the poor, and the despised of this world ; comparatively inferior in all that men esteem, and only great in the sight of God. How in the unequal struggle a body of such evident inferiority hath been preserved, is among the manifest evidences of his care, and the fulfilment of his promises, who hath said, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee ; ” “ Lo ! I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

The first age exhibited the blaze of gospel light in all its purity and vigor, and the triumphs of the cross over the power, craft, and malice of men. But clouds soon obscured the face of day : and though many were purified through the fires of martyrdom, and the body

of the Church was seen extending her wide arms to embrace the then known world, yet the enemy began to sow his tares among the wheat, and they sprang up so vigorously as threatened to choak the good seed. The profession growing general, and the power of godliness declining, no sooner had Christianity gained an establishment, than we see the Church sinking into a worldly sanctuary ; and ambition, pride, and avarice seated in the high places, and claiming unhallowed dominion over the consciences of men. For more than ten centuries, things continued to grow from evil to worse, till all religion at last seemed lost and buried, in name and form, in superstition and tyranny. A few indeed in every age, reduced very low, sometimes apparently to two or three witnesses, continued prophesying in sackcloth, to a world lying in wickedness. But God remembered mercy. His promises must be fulfilled in their season. A day of revival broke ; the light diffused itself on every side, a beam of it hath passed unto the ends of the earth. However sad our declensions have since been, God hath never forsaken his Church and people. Times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord. In our own land remarkable interpositions of his arm made bare have appeared ; and greatly as our faith is often discouraged by the lukewarmness of the friends of truth, and the might and multitude of its enemies, yet how much more reason have we to hope, and how much more encouragement for exertion, than in the first days of reformation ? It appears much more practicable now to preach the gospel among all nations, than at that day to evangelize the smallest district. Great and manifold indeed are the discouragements yet in the way ; fear and unbelief magnify the difficulties ; and too many despairing of the event, discourage their brethren, and weaken their hands ; but surely if God will work, then none

can let it. Instruments will not be wanting for the greatest and most extensive exertions, when He in his providence opens the door of entrance, and by his spirit shall rouse up the zeal of very many, to say here am I, send me. We have seen strange things in our day, which could hardly have been imagined, even a few years ago ; and who can tell, but that we may see greater things than these, when the adorable Lord shall take to himself his great power and reign ; when all the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Such events the prophecies bid us expect ; such the promises embolden us to hope, will *shortly* come to pass. It is not by lying down in despondence, but by rising up with resolute determination to be found active in the cause of God and truth, that the work will be done. Let every faithful individual but solemnly and seriously enquire, what can *I* do ? Resolving to spare no labor ; to decline no hardship ; to omit no proper means ; but sacredly to devote his person, substance, influence, abilities, to advance the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost ; and it is impossible to say, what an amazing progress may be made in the course of a very few years. Whenever such a spirit, poured out from on high, shall animate the bosom of the real followers of the Lamb, then shall we see him coming with power and great glory. All obstacles will be laid low ; all difficulties surmounted ; and the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven, collected from the four corners of the earth, shall compose one fold under one Shepherd.

If any thing written in these pages shall stir up the heart of but one man to pray more fervently for this blessed advent—if it fire one tongue to speak more bold.

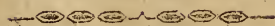
ly in the name of the Lord Jesus—if it shall have removed the least of our unhallowed prejudices against each other—or tended to conciliate the faithful few, whom education or bigotted asperity had disunited—if it shall help to concentrate our efforts more vigorously in the one great object, and to hasten the desirable event—then shall I not regret the labor of this research, and shall hope that I have not lived or written in vain.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.



No. I.

Concise View of the present State of Evangelical Religion.

THESE Volumes of Ecclesiastical History submitted to the judgment of the public have been drawn up, amidst the astonishing changes which have of late convulsed the great republic of Christendom, and the issue of the conflict we still wait in awful suspense. The Great Lord of the Universe, however afflictive the dispensations of his providence may appear, will ultimately over-rule every event for his own glory, and the accomplishing his promises respecting his Church and people. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion that which shall not be destroyed. The desolations which are wrought will ultimately cast down the barriers which have been erected against evangelical religion; and whatever be the event politically, truth and godliness shall finally prevail, till the earth be covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

In full confidence that the counsel of the Lord shall assuredly be fulfilled in his own appointed time, we may with some pleasing prospects of its near approach, contemplate the present state of the Christian world; and the review will give strong reason to believe, amidst all

the just complainings of the spread of infidelity and licentiousness, that the former days were at no time, probably since the first spread of Christianity, better than these; and that, humanly speaking, in no age the facilities were so great, and the means apparently so efficaciously provided for spreading the knowledge of salvation to the ends of the earth. It is impossible not to deplore the evils which abound, yet ought we not the less to rejoice in the glorious diffusion of gospel grace, and the evidently encroaching circle of true Christianity abroad and at home. Nor can we but indulge the pleasing hope, that the same ability to spread the doctrines of truth, and the spirit of zeal which hath lately arisen to make the attempt, will gain force as it proceeds; and that whenever peace shall again return to bless the earth the restored communication among the nations, shall mightily tend to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in Christendom, as well as facilitate a door of entrance among the heathen, who have not yet heard his name, or seen his glory.

In the mean time, it may be encouraging as well as instructive to cast a glance over the nations professing Christianity, to consider their present situation with respect to the great object sought out in the History here detailed, *the true Spiritual Church of Christ*, and to be confirmed in the conviction, that it hath increased, is increasing, and shall increase, till the gentiles shall come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising.

In this concise review, I shall begin with the North of Europe, and proceed to the South, turn to America and the Indies, and pass to New Holland and the Islands of the Pacific Ocean, that wait for his law, pointing out every hopeful symptom that leads to usher in the days of the Son of Man.

RUSSIA.

WE have considered the state of this vast empire, hardly yet emerging from barbarism, in many of the provinces, and little advanced in evangelical knowledge or practice; yet may it justly be regarded as a favorable circumstance, that a growing intercourse formed with the more polished nations of Europe, naturally leads to a high state of civilization, and to a happier cultivation of literature. And as the most intimate connections of Russia are with those Protestant nations in which the power of godliness most prevails, it cannot but afford many and great opportunities for the admission of real truth and godliness among them; especially as the policy of the government holds out encouragement to the settlement of foreigners, and indulges all Protestants with free toleration. This has already produced some happy effects in the little colony of Germans on the Wolga; the faithful who have arisen in Lithuania; and probably a few at least dispersed through the empire, who, having the book of truth, and liberty to consult its contents, are more than nominal believers. It is a great advantage, that Christianity is the general profession, that the orthodox creeds are professedly the national belief, and however low the present state of spiritual religion may be among them, some sparks have appeared, and a door of hope is open for the admission of farther light and truth, whenever it shall please the Lord to arise, and have mercy on that part of his Zion.

SWEDEN,

LUTHERAN in profession, enjoying the free use of the word of God, holding the Augsbarg Confession, and filled with ministers of the Christian sanctuary, affords symptoms of real religion, and prospects of greater revival. The correspondences between us and them, of late breathe a cordial good will to the cause of God and truth, afford information of new efforts making to spread the knowledge of evangelical doctrines among the poor of the flock; and in the very lamentations they contain of the spread of infidel principles, and the too great indifference to all spiritual religion, it is manifest there is a body yet remaining, who sigh for the abominations that are committed to the dishonor of the Christian name, and whose voice is yet heard, preaching and teaching Jesus Christ, however unfashionable such fervor may appear, and such truth be regarded. If active zeal and the power of godliness be at a low ebb; there is still vitality in the body, and only waits the coming of the spirit of the Lord, on the appointed Sampsons, who shall cast down the temples of Dagon.

DENMARK AND NORWAY,

ARE in a state similar to their neighbors; of the same religious profession, sharing, I fear, equally in their declensions and infidelity, but retaining in their established church the true principles, and not destitute of faithful witnesses, who preach and teach Jesus Christ, know the power of his resurrection, and seek to make him known to others. Their missions to Greenland and

the Coast of Malabar, speak an attention to the Christian doctrine : and whatever cause for complaint there may be of want of zeal and enlargement in these objects, yet, so far as they have gone, there is a blessing, and nothing hinders, whenever the Lord shall waken their ministers to more vigorous exertions, but that they may enter in both the Indies, and lift up the banner of the cross.

GERMANY.

THIS vast country, divided into different principalities the cradle of reformation, in so many places affording strong symptoms of awakened zeal for the cause of Christ ; and from whence the good Moravians have gone forth to spread eminently the gospel among the heathen, may be justly expected to have their youth renewed, as the eagle's. In the north, chiefly Protestant, much true religion is yet to be found. The annual meeting of many zealous Lutheran ministers in Lusatia, proves, that a living body of faithful witnesses still subsists. From Berlin, Lusatia, Saxony, &c. correspondences of the most pleasing nature assure, that there is a generation to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Efforts are made to send forth men of faith and truth, to address the poor, and spread religious tracts, and the labors are blest. It must be acknowledged, that in Berlin, and all the courts of Germany, the fashionable philosophy has made a rapid progress, and those who had confessedly no part in the kingdom of God in their hearts, were ready to take refuge in infidelity, and to treat the religion of Jesus with contempt ; but it hath survived their Pagan predecessors, and it will live and flourish when all its revilers shall fade as the leaf. Ma-

ny continue to lift up a standard against the overflowings of ungodliness. Of late, a spirit of zeal and life seems awakened in divers places, and it is hoped the number of faithful witnesses increases. The door is open, and however there may be many adversaries, they have apparently much less difficulties to encounter, than Luther, Carlostadt, and others met and overcame. We have assured evidence, that many faithful laborers there cultivate the Lord's vineyard. The cordial approbation expressed, and the affectionate regard testified towards those in England, who have lately turned their attention to the poor heathen, demonstrate that the love of the truth still lies deep at their hearts. May their own labors tend more abundantly to diffuse it on every side !

POLAND,

NOW no more a separate kingdom, has certainly by its partition, lost nothing on the side of evangelical religion, and at least gained greater facilities for its admission, whenever the Lord shall pour out his spirit, raise up instruments, and send them forth to labor in that barren land. Those under Russian and Prussian dominion, will probably meet no obstacle from government in the introduction of the true gospel. If good subjects, it will be permitted to them to choose their own religious profession. That spiritual matters are at a very low ebb, is much to be feared, where Romanism has so long predominated, and Socinian Christianity held for a while its strong holds : but the darkest moment precedes the dawn. Arise Lord, and plead thine own cause !

UNITED PROVINCES.

OF all the nations of the Continent of the reformed religion, in these provinces its most living power seems to have been preserved. We have seen their history, and in this moment of political crisis, have the pleasing evidence, that whatever their future destination may be, under whatever government subsisting, the spirit of life and truth still burns among them with an unextinguished ardor. Greatly as they may have suffered by preceding declensions, or more lately from French fraternity, we know there is a precious seed preserved in the midst of them, both ministers and people, who are counted to the Lord for a generation. The convulsions they have undergone, and the sufferings they have endured, have purified many in the fires. They have felt the Lord's controversy with them, and have awakened from the torpor of indifference. A spirit of zeal and activity is excited. At Rotterdam many have united for the purpose of extending the gospel among the heathen. In Friesland a considerable number of ministers have associated for the same blessed end. Some happy symptoms of a deeper concern about eternal things has appeared in different places, and these awakenings speak present mercy, and augur future blessings. A preparation is begun, whenever happy days of peace shall return, for arising to the help of the Lord; and with their renovated commerce, none are likely to possess greater opportunities of spreading the gospel among the heathen than our Batavian brethren.

SWITZERLAND.

PASSING up the Rhine to its source, we know at Franckfort, and Neuwied, and probably at other places, that there is a faithful people, witnessing to the power of the gospel, extending their desires to the heathen, and longing for the spread of saving truth into all lands. We have assured evidence, that the Swiss Cantons, however declined in religion, or ravaged by invaders, are not destitute of the living power of godliness, and many are associated for the revival of true Christianity. At Basil and Zurich are found men in whom is the spirit of the living God, who are united to spread his glorious gospel around them, and are zealously disposed to forward missionary efforts among the heathen. Such a marked evidence of active exertions manifests the remaining power of divine grace in the midst of them; and, that from them shall the word of God again sound forth, and that they shall be made blessed and happy instruments in the preaching of the everlasting gospel.

FRANCE.

IN the present convulsed, and turpid state of that great nation, where all religion seems for a while to be overturned, it is difficult to say, what true religion is yet hidden among them, and what may be hoped, when quiet of any kind, and a settled government shall succeed to the state of war, and ravage, under which all the provinces groan. Many Protestants are found holding fast the faithful word. We know that in Languedoc an earnest desire has been expressed to send a-

among them ministers, who should preach the pure gospel of Christ. We have evidence that some such are laboring with zeal in Alsace, in connexion with the society at Basil : and it can hardly be doubted, that in other places, however the spirit of Protestant zeal may have declined, that the Lord hath not left himself without witnesses. When the day shall come, that friendly intercourse between contending nations shall be restored, the number of these will probably be found more than we expected, and the very miseries of the kingdom to have contributed to call men's mind to a deeper consideration of eternal things. Though I can look only on those of the reformed religion for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and believe it is from them it must arise ; I mean not to suggest that real spiritual men may not be found among the French Catholics, who have not renounced the Lord Jesus Christ, though they may have been restrained from more open confession of him in those days of rebuke and blasphemy ; and this good, I trust, shall arise out of all the evils which have preceded, that men's minds will be more prepared for the gospel word, and greater liberty in religious matters be admitted, whatever party may finally prevail, than was before. The very kindness shewn to their exiles, will teach at least a more tolerant spirit. If the barriers of bigotry are broken down, and some of the stumbling blocks removed out of the way, divine truth will find easier access ; and, whenever the Lord shall speak the word, great will be the company of the preachers. Why may not this people, after all its convulsions, become a praise in the earth ?

From this review therefore of the *Protestant* cause on the continent, there appears in all lands a precious seed counted to the Lord for a generation, and a body rea-

dy for active service, though small, and of no reputation, yet among the weak things of God that are stronger than men.

In all the *Catholic countries*, a state of great debility has been apparent, and the vials of wrath hath been particularly poured out on the throne of the beast. The ecclesiastics, the convents, and all the wealth and magnificence attached to them, have been in an especial manner the objects of destruction; and are so fallen, as probably never to rise up again to their former weight and importance. The prevalence of impiety and infidelity, however greatly to be deplored, has cast contempt upon the dogmas of popery, and loosened every man's bonds from that servitude of opinion, in which they had been so long held. To read and think is a liberty now generally taken; and however the best things are abused, the benefits, with all the abuses, greatly preponderate. Persecution, on account of opinions, will, henceforth, more difficultly be supported, and its savageness at least controled. A sense of interest, as well as the dictates of humanity, prescribes greater indulgence to men of different sentiments, whilst they are useful, peaceable, and industrious subjects. Even the lawlessness, libertinism, and universal rage for pleasure, however criminal, offer no such barriers to divine truth, and the convictions of conscience, as the false religion, superstitious practices, and commutations of popery. The idea of pardon being to be purchased in this life, and the torments of the next bought off, were much more fatal opiates to the conscience, than all the suggestions of infidelity. The latter left the heart more open to the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; the former steeled men against all conviction, and lulled the conscience asleep in a pretended religious hope,

and there was no hope. Thus all the circumstances considered, in all the lands of popery, the obstructions are certainly diminished, and the way of access easier for the admission of evangelical truth, and a silent preparation made for the way of the Lord. I have no doubt that a few years will see the pure gospel preached in France, and even in that bigotted country, the Netherlands. Italy, rescued by the warriors of the Greek and Protestant professions in a great measure, can hardly forbid toleration to the religion of their defenders; and Spain and Portugal, though last, yet in the end shall be enlightened with the beams of gospel grace. In the consideration therefore of all circumstances on the continent, I cannot but infer, the great declension of the popish power, the more abundant facility for the admission of religious enquiry, and the probability, that as the arms of persecution are weakened, the exertions of the faithful will be increased, and a part of the pressure being taken off the spring, its elasticity will overcome the remaining resistance. I look forward to the approaching century with hope, for great increase of the *one true Church*, of the redeemed, whose names are written in Heaven.

THE BRITISH ISLES.

BRITAIN seems preserved in a peculiar manner for the purposes of God's glory in the revival of religion in the earth. Providentially favored with an extension of commerce, such as no nation ever before possessed: enabled by her resources to stop the ravages of the Gallic torrent, which threatened to sweep the earth with desolation; and in her bosom containing a body of such faithful people, as perhaps no other kingdom on the

earth can produce. The amazing increase of gospel truth among ourselves, the spirit of activity which hath been of late exerted to make known the glory, and to erect the kingdom of our Immanuel in the hearts of men—the many, and increasing associations to diffuse the knowledge of Christ Jesus, wherever our wooden bulwarks float on the ocean—the vast number of faithful witnesses rising up at home—and the readiness of a multitude to devote themselves to the service of the heathen in all lands—all these things speak an era highly auspicious to the progress of evangelical religion, and the more extensive spread of true Christianity, than our times had before seen or hoped for, or any of the ages that are past presented to our view. It is indeed yet but the morning spread upon the mountains; but if God will work, it shall shine more and more unto the perfect day. Deploring, as we justly may, the wide spreading ravages of infidel opinions; the eager pursuit of dissipation which abounding wealth affords; the earthly tempers engendered and nourished by great commercial engagements; and the irreligion of the many, the wise, the mighty, and the noble; yet is there found in the midst of us, a great and active body, who have the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ supremely at heart; and are willing to spend and be spent in this blessed work. Nor at any time since the Reformation hath there been found a more diffused knowledge of the truths of the gospel, and a more apparent disposition to extend the communication of them to the ends of the earth.

It is a favorable feature in the comparison of our condition with other nations, that in our seminaries of learning, open infidelity meets no encouragement. Our universities profess orthodoxy; and however they have

shared in the general taint, and been degraded in the scale of Christian graces, there is still found in the midst of them a precious seed, and increasing, of those who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. And though too many come forth who have drank of the bitter waters, and go out to seek their place in the worldly sanctuary of the Church, eager to secure its preferments, and little careful of the souls committed to their charge; yet some are found men of a different stamp, who have not so learned Christ, but have been taught by the great Interpreter the things which be of the spirit of God, and faithfully preach and teach Jesus Christ.* It is also a singular token for good, that several highly promising seminaries are erected entirely with a view to maintain the purity of gospel truth, into which none are intentionally admitted, nor from which any are sent out, but such as give reasonable ground of confidence, that they have themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, and expect no higher honor or reward, than to be able to testify to others how gracious that Lord is, and how blessed are they who know, love, serve and enjoy him. About two thousand such we have in the midst of us already laboring, and heard by about six hundred thousand auditors with serious attention: and whilst the number of the faithful preachers is continually increasing, the Lord is pleased to add unto his Church daily of such as shall be saved. It is a pleasing fact, which in my researches has come under my own knowledge, and should stimulate to growing activity in the work of God: that the labors of an individual have been blest so extensively, as to have called about forty persons to the knowledge of the truth under his ministry, who are now preaching the gospel, or have finished their course with joy. A land where God has been pleased so evidently to manifest his power and grace, is, I trust, re-

served, not only to be a praise in the earth, but the chosen instrument in the hand of his Providence to promote the coming of his kingdom throughout all nations, till the expected end shall come.

AMERICA

CONTAINS still in its bosom the precious seeds destined to bring forth fruit unto life eternal through that vast continent. The struggles for liberty have not proved the most friendly to the progress of religion, yet the growing population, and the increasing importance of the United States, afford strong arguments to expect a great diffusion of gospel knowledge. The spread of new settlers farther and farther among the Indian nations—the perfect freedom and toleration every where established—the number of faithful and zealous men, who hold fast the faithful word—the number of Methodist societies every where formed—the establishments of the Moravian brethren—the societies lately formed in New-York, and Connecticut, for the purposes of sending the gospel to their heathen neighbors, and evangelizing the Indian Tribes—the expulsion of the French from Canada—and the feebleness of the Spaniard to the south—above all, the great revival of religion in many parts of the United States before recorded, all conspire to open a door for greater diffusion of truth, and embolden us to expect faithful missionaries, who shall arise to carry the knowledge of salvation from the banks of the Mississippi, through the yet unexplored regions that lead to the Pacific Ocean. I have before me an account of efforts made and making to traverse this vast expanse, and to form a communication with the western coasts so lately surveyed by Capt. Vancouver and Capt.

Broughton. Mr. Mackenzie, from Montreal, has reached the sea coast not far from Nootka Sound, and returned. But if commercial purposes can lead men to such attempts, surely the souls of men are a greater object, and demand more mighty efforts to seek and save them. Every day the practicability of enlarging the circle is more apparent, and whilst the means of new settlements in these unknown regions multiply, a strong disposition appears to carry the gospel, as well as the commerce and arts of Europe, to the numbers of savage nations, which occupy this vast territory.

THE ISLES OF THE GREAT SOUTHERN OCEAN,

ARE yet more accessible, and have engaged particular attention, and though difficulties and disappointments retard the progress of those men of God, who are engaged in this highly laudable attempt, to carry the everlasting gospel to these populous and fruitful islands, yet such a commencement hath been made, such a fund provided, such evidence obtained of the practicability of the attempt, and such facilities for the execution of it, that it can hardly be doubted but that in a very few years that hemisphere will turn to the sun of righteousness, and enjoy the brightness of his shining. Peculiarly favorable circumstances will engage attention to these countries. The fertility of the soil—the beauty and healthiness of the climate—the uncivilized state of the natives, which gives Europeans so great an advantage over them—the facility wherewith settlements may be formed—and the easiness with which they can be maintained—besides the probability, that the spirit of commerce and adventure will make some essay to secure the first advantages, and

forward civilization, if the gospel which we have sent them should not by its own divine power produce all the happy effects upon the natives, which we hope and expect to hear.

ASIA,

TEEMING with an immense population, offers, through the settlements of the Europeans, a door of hope for the entrance of the everlasting gospel. In Bengal a noble attempt has been made by the Baptists, which though yet a day of small things, we hope shall have great increase, it affords one proof more, that when zeal is awake there is no such lion in the streets as should affright with his roaring. Other attempts, though feeble, are making to send the light of truth into that benighted region, were, though the thousands and ten thousands of Europeans have settled for the objects of gain, few have thought those of godliness worth pursuing, and in all that can be called religion, the difference between a Christian, a Mahomedan, and a Gentoo, is but the name. On the Malabar coast a few, and but a few, labor as a kind of forlorn hope under the patronage of the great society in London, for propagating the gospel: their numbers thinned by death, and not replenished by men of equal spirit with the departed, the mission languishes, and calls for more vigor in the pursuit of the object, and greater care in the selection of the missionaries. A new society of the episcopal clergy lately formed, will, it is to be hoped, take the desolate regions into their care, and turn their attention to these countries where Brahma and Mahomed yet reign uncontrouled; and where all the vast and populous countries, from the Thracian Bosphorus to Japan,

are almost destitute of every spark of Christianity, and lying in the darkness of spiritual death : oh, that they might awake to newness of life !

AFRICA,

DARK as her sooty inhabitants, and overwhelmed with heathen ignorance, or the Mahomedan delusion, waits for the sun of righteousness. A gleam has darted on her coasts, at Sierra Leone, and the Cape of Good Hope, the harbinger of a blessed day. At present, however, few, are found laborers in this uncultivated vineyard. The report from Sierra Leone affords no sanguine expectation from that quarter. The labors of the good Moravians at the Cape present a more hopeful appearance. The attempt of Dr. Vanderkemp and his associates has begun with the most promising appearances, and if the increase be answerable to the commencement, the harvest will be plenteous. The account which has been given under the head of missions cannot but awaken the cries of the faithful for more laborers in this vineyard, and to expect from this providential opening, that Ethiopia and Saba will soon stretch out their hands unto God.

From the whole of this review it cannot but strike the attentive observer, how very circumscribed is the extent of the Church of the living God, and how immense the nations still destitute of the light of life, who are notwithstanding given to Christ for his inheritance, and who shall come forth from darkness, and shew themselves at the divine call, when he shall come to claim the throne, whose right it is, and to “overturn, overturn, overturn,” all the enemies, who shall rise up against him. Fully

expecting the accomplishment of what God had spoken, the preceding history has opened what hath been done, what is doing, and what may be hoped. If we merely reasoned on the difficulties, and the power we possess, our hearts might well faint, and our hands be feeble ; but if we believe the great and precious promises, all things are possible to him that believeth. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of God's word of prophecy and promise shall ever pass away until the whole is fulfilled. The things impossible for men are possible to God.

No. II.

On the most probable means of extending and enlarging the Spiritual Church of Christ, particularly in the Heathen World.

THE object chiefly kept in view in these volumes, has been the spiritual Church of Christ, composed of the individuals in all ages, who have held the doctrines of godliness, and adorned them by an exemplary conversation. From such alone can activity be expected in extending to others the inestimable blessings of the everlasting gospel, the transcendent excellence of which they have themselves proved, and compared with which, all things besides appear in their eyes to be dung and loss. These have been brought forth wherever discovered, among all nations, and of whatever denomination of Christians. Whether the impartiality professed has been sacredly maintained the public must determine; conscious of the difficulty of being exempt from the prejudices of education or connections, the author can only cast himself on the candor of those who are best acquainted with the subject, are themselves spiritual men, and know how hard it is to prevent all undue bias in reports and representations, which have religion for their object: such will not severely censure the mistakes,

—————Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

———*which, through inattention, or the imperfection of human nature, have crept in.*

In one thing he is confident he is not mistaken, that the supreme desire of his soul is to see the coming and

glory of Christ's kingdom, by whomsoever promoted, or by whatever means accomplished. How this may be most speedily and effectually done, has been the prevailing object of his consideration and labors for more than forty years, and it hath been the supreme delight of these years, to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering, in a happy revival of spiritual religion, and the progress of late beyond his most sanguine expectations.

That the gospel should be preached to every creature, is the clear and indisputable command of Him, whom all Christians profess themselves bound to hear and obey; and without returning to the consideration of what constitutes that *unadulterated word*, it is evident to the most superficial observer, how immense are the regions which have not heard the name of our Redeemer. And even where his gospel hath been long preached, how little hath its divine influence been manifested in the hearts of men? There is therefore the most imperious call of duty on all those, who have believed to the saving of their souls, to rouse up every exertion to diffuse the knowledge of Christ's redemption, through the habitable globe. Men cannot believe in him of whom they have not heard, nor hear without a preacher. Who shall go, may deserve solemn consideration. That great should be the company of the preachers, in the view of the vastness of the heathen world, as well as the torpidity of those, professing Christianity, can admit of no doubt or dispute. To provide proper instruments, therefore, should engage the deepest attention of all who would not come under the charge of knowing the path of duty and neglecting it.

It is one of the singular features of the present day that there seems to be an uncommon concern a-

wakened to this object, throughout the Christian world. The Societies formed in London, Scotland, America, Holland, the Cape, with the corresponding members through all Christendom, animated by the same spirit, and avowing the same design, give some reviving hope that this is the dawn of that glorious day which we expect, and so devoutly pray for, when we cry, "THE KINGDOM COME." The very spirit existing, has not failed immediately to produce some pleasing effects in all lands; and calling forth the zeal of very many, in spreading the life of godliness around them, has evidently prepared the way for the execution of the very purposes of their association, by rousing the attention, and engaging the minds of their brethren to be fellow-helpers of the truth; by furnishing supplies, and encouraging men of like zeal to say, "Here am I, send me." What has been done by one of these societies has been noticed in some of the preceding pages, and as all these institutions are as yet in an infant state, it can hardly be conjectured what they will be able to achieve; but if they follow the example of the London Missionary Society, and that body proceed with the vigor with which it hath begun, it is impossible to say how great a part of the heathen world may come to the brightness of Christ's rising. It is justly to be apprehended, that so great a work will not proceed without difficulties and disappointments. The great enemy of souls will not be asleep, but exert his devices to discourage or to distract. Nor will it be from *without* merely that there will be struggles; *within*, men's views are so different, and their disposition so unlike, that in the best assemblies and the most approved characters, it will not be possible to prevent diversities of opinions and want of unanimity, even when the members wish to act aright, and have the cause truly at heart. Nothing but

the power and presence of him who can over-rule the corrupt affections of sinful men, and make them to be of one mind in an house, and especially in very large bodies, can cement their union so as to direct the momentum of their efforts to some great and practicable objects. It must be acknowledged that in this behalf the Moravians appear to give a most edifying example.

Where these objects of missionary labours chiefly present themselves, and *how* they may most effectually be accomplished, I shall therefore venture to suggest ; and whether it should be my mercy to see them fulfilled, or sleeping in the dust, to hope that others' eyes will be more blessed, I shall count it the great felicity and chief end of my life, if I can contribute in the least measure to facilitate the execution of these noble designs.

In viewing the desolations of the heathen world on every side, our first attention will be required to weigh with deep intelligence of the subject, what reasonable hopes may be entertained ; and where the door of entrance opens with the fairest prospects of success. Some of the greatest and most populous nations, such as China and Japan, crowded with inhabitants, millions upon millions furnish a desirable field, but the nature of their government seems to forbid all access, and it would only be devoting victims to the slaughter, to send thither those men of God, who should teach and preach Jesus Christ. Divine Providence has not as yet made the path strait into these lands, and we need no vision to forbid us making the attempt.

The heathens in Asia, to whom we may have access in our wide extended territories in the East, offer a more practicable door of hope, though strong and pe-

culiar barriers fence them around, whether Hindoos or Mahomedans. Where God will work, none can let it ; but when we are surveying the great objects, and considering according to human probability *where* the Lord points the way for the execution of his designs, and *with such instruments as we are provided*, I have always been convinced that the heathen, who are in an inferior state of knowledge and civilization, are to be preferred to those who are not advanced. These views coincided with those of the London Missionary Society, and they accordingly preferred as the scene of their operations the islands of the Pacific Ocean, and the untutored son of Africa, to the more instructed inhabitants of the Indies ; and hitherto nothing has occurred to impeach the wisdom of their decision ; but contrariwise, with as few obstacles as could possibly be expected, the Lord seems to be opening a door of salvation to the Gentiles in a variety of places, and more help is needed than can easily be supplied. When a thousand lands are alike destitute, we can only hope to supply the more urgent calls, and lay a foundation on which others may erect a larger superstructure.

It will be worth attention, to consider the stations to be fixed upon, as most advantageous for the extensive spread of the everlasting gospel, where the apparent difficulties of admission are least, and the prospects of success greatest ; and I am fully persuaded none can be found preferable to those we have already taken, and where a happy commencement hath been made for a more abundant progress.

Whoever is well versed in the geography of the country, will immediately discern, that in the Pacific Ocean, no two stations can be chosen more central,

and attended with more peculiar advantages, than Tongataboo and Otahetie. If no attempt had ever been made, and the subject were now first canvassed, these would probably decide every unthinking and unprejudiced mind, as the place from whence the gospel, once there fixed, might more easily be spread through the immense islands of that ocean. We have made the essay, and have now conclusive evidence of the practicability of the scheme, and the different bodies of our missionary brethren seated in each of these stations, have provided us with a facility of means for proceeding, equal to every reasonable hope. We have obtained the language, are familiarised with the manners of the people, and charmed with the abundance of the soil and salubrity of the climate.

The ignorance, the levity, the stupidity, the perverseness of the heathen, we expect to meet, and overcome. If therefore this ought to be a principal object, if we but now first consulted merely where we should begin with the greatest prospects of success, how much more ought our past experience to determine us to proceed with greater vigor, and more considerable reinforcements, to secure the advantages we have gained, to consolidate the work we have commenced, and to form in each, such a settlement, as, we may be morally certain, will be able to maintain itself, and diffuse the light of truth on every side.

It is evident, that thus occupying the most eligible stations of this great ocean, with an easy and constant communication established with our brethren, and that capable of being carried on, not only without exhausting our funds, but with advantage to them, if our present situation were wisely improved, we should be enabled

for services of the most extensive kind. From Otaheite, all the Society Islands, those to the east in Bougainville's archipelago, those to the south which have been discovered, Tobouai and others; the Marquesas to the north; and as our powers increased, the Sandwich Islands; these are within an easy reach, and the coast of north-west America equally accessible. A schooner, which could easily be built, would be sufficient to visit and keep up connections with all those places, whenever we had formed a solid settlement at Matavai, and could issue forth from thence, with such as would be possessed of the language, and probably attended by some of the natives themselves; for it is neither presumptuous nor absurd, to expect that the Lord will give us some of their souls for our wages, and that their children may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Perhaps a yet nobler field opens from Tongataboo, and the same means in our power. For situation nothing can be more providentially placed. An extensive dominion is already established, of their chiefs over numberless islands; and if we have the friendship of the monarch, Futtasaihe, which appeared highly probable from the knowledge we have received, we should find easy access to every part of his dominions. Whether they reach to the Navigator's Isles, is uncertain; but the friendly communication which they have together is well known: these are peculiarly a desirable object. The Feegee islands are within easy access of a canoe—all the vast chain, containing millions of inhabitants to the north-west, and north-east, the new Hebrides, the Navigator's isles, the Carolinas; and to the south, New Zealand accessible. Whether we can form a large and consolidated establishment, without exciting the jealousy

of the natives, the brethren on the spot can best decide. We may hope their conduct will have removed suspicion, and secured to us the affection of the inhabitants. At Matavai there can hardly be a doubt, that we might easily be placed above all reasonable dread of danger, and with any measure of Christian prudence and meekness, secure ourselves, without offending or alarming the natives. At least our peaceableness would soon remove all apprehensions.

Through the whole heathen world I believe no such object will be found of apparent utility, or that will so cordially concentrate the affection, and rouse the efforts of all the people of God, whose attention is now awake, in every Christian land, to support, extend, and carry on the work to some great and happy issue.

AFRICA next seems to stretch out her hands unto God, and to offer a most abundant scene for missionary labor and success. Our efforts at Sierra Leone and its vicinity, though almost abortive, did not, ought not, to discourage. Providence furnished us with a more healthy climate, and greater facilities of penetrating the interior, at the Cape of Good Hope: and if we may reason from the events which have arisen on our first attempts, a firm conclusion may be drawn that the Lord hath called us thither, and wills we should vigorously pursue what has been so happily begun. Three great scenes for labor are opened to us at the Cape and its vicinity, among *the natives and numerous slaves* of that colony, who have heard gladly, and are thirsting for instruction, which surely will be speedily afforded them. *The vast Caffre nation*, to whom it was originally our intention that our brethren should go, seems to occupy an extensive tract of country from the

Indian Ocean, perhaps to the Atlantic. How far they ascend into the interior is yet unknown, or whether through their country we can have access to any great nations in their vicinity, is to be ascertained only by some among them; the apparent probability of it is however great. The eagerness of the *Boschemen* nation to embrace and possess some of our missionaries, is one of the singular leadings of divine Providence, and seems to promise every blessing we could hope from such an undertaking. The instruments hitherto employed are indeed too, too few, and in the eye of sense too feeble, and cry aloud for a more numerous host to come over and help them. Their voice no doubt will be heard among us, and many be ready to say, Here am I, send me.

These are apparently the great doors of entrance to the heathen, immediately presented to our view, capable of being easily supplied, and promising the largest increase; sufficient of themselves for a while to engage all our attention, without diverting it to smaller and inconsiderable attempts, which, by dividing our forces, would weaken our efforts in those great and noble pursuits, unto which a gracious providence seems to have led us by the hand; and if once any happy progress be made, they open farther, and then easily accessible, objects into the interior of that immense and almost unknown continent, as well as to the vast island of Madagascar adjacent. The travels of Mr. Park give a pleasing view of the temper and docility of the negroes. All to the south of the Niger, seems to be occupied by the men of that race. The time perhaps is approaching, when the children of Ham shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and be numbered with the sons of God. Indeed it must be owned, that these commencements, however auspicious, are diminutively small. Yet a lit-

the spark may kindle a great fire. The gospel was, from the beginning, spread by the labors of a few individuals. He that enabled Paul fully to preach the gospel from Jerusalem, round about unto Illyricum, has the residue of the Spirit, and can accomplish as easily now as then, the eternal purposes of his will.

That something should be attempted, seems the general desire of the thousands and tens of thousands of God's people in all lands. The little that hath been undertaken, confirms and encourages our hopes in the most enlarged manner. Pursuing these promising beginnings, every step we advance will make the next more practicable, and the leadings of divine Providence direct us where we doubt, instruct us where we have mistaken, and tend to open a greater and more effectual way into the heathen world than hath yet been discovered.

The activity which hath been excited *at home* by these efforts to spread the gospel *abroad*, is at the same time a proof of the divine benediction upon this labor of love, and a most effectual means of continuing a supply of plenteous laborers for the harvest. If the means which have been employed are pursued with increasing diligence, we cannot but hope that the issue will be more abundantly blessed.

Roused to a solemn consideration of the subject, in many of the congregations of the faithful among whom the power of godliness has been diffused, and encouraged by the exhortations of their zealous pastors, some of the most intelligent and best informed, have offered themselves to visit in their vicinity, the villages and hamlets, where the neglect of the Sabbath, the distance

of places of worship, and the ignorance of young and old, have especially demanded instruction. Hither they have gone to erect schools—to converse with the poor—to visit the sick—to read—and, where there are persons qualified, to expound the scriptures: and the number of new places of divine worship which have thus been opened, is very great. It is highly to be desired, that the same plan should be every where prudently and zealously pursued, as nothing appears to have a greater tendency to diffuse the knowledge of Christ among us, than such institutions. The faithful ministers of the gospel will therefore do well to encourage these endeavors, and to excite the zealous of their flocks to be thus helpers together in the truth: and such a body cannot fail to afford missionary supplies for the heathen abroad, as well as at home. It would be highly desirable also, if all the ministers of Christ encouraged those who seemed desirous to devote themselves to missionary labors among the heathen, and afforded them such means of improvement as would render them more useful laborers, whenever the calls of fresh supplies of missionaries for the heathen should be heard. It is from the drops which fall on the hill, trickle into the brook, and flow into the stream, that the river must be composed. It will be highly desirable, and most conducive to promote this great work of God, if every zealous minister of the gospel bears this continually on his heart, carries it to his great Master on his knees, and contributes his mite to the treasures of the Sanctuary.

It is not necessary, that missionaries should all, or many of them, be men of letters, or classical knowledge. If a few only are persons of more improved understanding, the body of their brethren, united with them, and under them, will be as usefully employed in their sever-

al arts and occupations, as in any other mode whatever. Examples of industry, and instructors in the several handicrafts which lead to civilization, they will have the strongest tendency to attach the natives to us, invite them into our society, and bring them under the means of grace. By patient perseverance in teaching the rising generation, and bearing with the prejudices of those who are more advanced in years, we may engage them to form a happy union with us, and the issue be their conversion to the truth as it is in Jesus.

Hoping that such a missionary spirit may every day be more diffused and strengthened, and fully assured of its tendency to produce the most blessed effects around us, and to the ends of the earth, it is greatly to be wished that those who have begun will not be weary in well doing, discouraged by disappointments, or deterred by difficulties; but by their example engage and excite others to pursue the same steps, till such a body may be formed, as shall furnish, whenever and wherever wanted, faithful laborers for the harvest. The work is the Lord's; but men must be the instruments, and the means must be employed before the end can be attained.

No. III.

Memoirs of the Leadings of Divine Providence, in the Call of Captain James Wilson to the Work of conducting the South Sea Mission.

AS the Church of God in general, and the Missionary Society in particular, are so highly indebted to the noble and disinterested services of Captain James Wilson, I wish to record his name among the worthies, who, in spreading the gospel among the heathen, deserve to be had in especial remembrance. The singular wisdom and prudence with which he discharged his trust, and the uncommon success which crowned his labors, through the whole of his long and perilous voyage, are a fresh manifestation of the care and keeping of that gracious Lord, who had so often before, and in such a wonderful manner, led him by a way, which he knew not ; preserved him amidst deaths oft, and dangers so peculiar ; and after bearing with him in all his rebellion, and insensibility, having chosen him from the beginning for himself, prepared him by a series of preceding providences for that work, which he was so peculiarly qualified to fulfil.

The following particulars are collected from minutes of conversations, held at different times. As the circumstances affected me in the relation, I cannot but persuade myself they will produce the alike effect upon others ; lead them to admiring and adoring views of the riches of the grace herein displayed ; and be to the praise of his glory, who hath mercy on whom He will have mercy. I persuade myself the Captain will not be

offended with the liberty I have taken, and will rejoice if his eventful story, and its happy issue, become the means of spiritual benefit, to any of the like sinful sons of men.

Captain James Wilson was the youngest of seventeen children; his father was commander of a ship in the Newcastle trade, and brought him up from his earliest years in the sea service. During the last war he served in America, and was present at the battle of Bunker's Hill, and of Long-Island.

On his return from America, he obtained a birth as a mate of an East Indiaman, being, though young, an able navigator. After arriving in safety at Bengal, he quitted his ship, and determined to abide in that country. There he became engaged in the country service, and in one of these voyages, Mr. Cabel, the marine pay-master, sailing with him from Madras to Calcutta, he was so much pleased with his conduct, as to commence the most cordial friendship with him; and soon after their arrival in Bengal, sent him in a small vessel to the Nicobar Islands, with dispatches for the ship's returning from the East, to advise them of the arrival of the French Squadron under Suffrein, on the coast, and to put them on their guard. The ship he commanded was ill found, and in the voyage her stern post grew so loose as to admit so much water, that with difficulty she was prevented from foundering. He was therefore obliged to run for Madras, and off Pulicat discovered the French fleet going down the coast: he expected them to chase, and pressed with all sail for the shore, where a dangerous shoal probably prevented pursuit and capture; but the ship was so leaky, he was obliged to run her on the beach to save their lives. He proceeded

thence to Madras, just at the critical moment when the settlement was in the greatest distress. Sir Eyre Coote had marched to the south, and was so surrounded by Hyder Ally's army, that no supplies could reach him by land; and the French Squadron, anchored at Pondicherry, had cut off all supplies by sea, so that the British troops were reduced to great difficulties, and in danger of famine, their stores being nearly exhausted.

Several *Pia* ships had been loaded with rice at Madras, but as the French fleet lay directly in the way, they dared not attempt the passage to Cuddalore, near which Sir Eyre Coote was encamped. The Governor of Madras, Mr. Smith, had heard of Mr. Willon, and though a young man, sent for him, and enquired, if he would attempt to carry down the ships with the supplies for the camp, stating the danger and hazard of the run, and offering him four hundred pagodas for the service, and more, if he should be detained beyond a fortnight. The Captain undertook to attempt the passage, and immediately made preparations for his departure. The vessel in which he embarked was about five hundred and twenty tons burden, with three others under his command, all navigated by black men, himself being the only European, except an officer who went down as passenger to the army. He pushed on as far as Sadras, about sixteen leagues, where he took refuge under the Dutch flag, and dispatched two *Hircarrahs* to Sir Eyre Coote, to inform him of his approach, and to expect his orders. But the roads were all so obstructed by Hyder's horse, that to avoid that marauding army, the *Hircarrahs* were obliged to take a great circuit; and as they ventured to travel only by night, they were eleven days before they returned. They brought from the General the most urgent orders to proceed at all hazards,

and without a moment's delay, adding, that if the Captain brought only one vessel, and lost the rest, it would be the most essential service. He accordingly immediately weighed anchor, proceeding at such a distance from Pondicherry as to see from the mast head the French flag, and if possible to pass them in the night undiscovered. The French fleet that very evening weighed anchor, occasioned by a singular circumstance, which was afterwards known. Suffrein had sent his water casks on shore to be filled, and they lay on the beach. Sir Eyre Coote had detached a corps of grenadiers and light infantry, who entered Pondicherry which was open on the land side since the fortifications had been demolished. They found and flayed all the casks, destroying them entirely; and this induced Suffrein to run down to Point De Gall to repair the loss, just at that moment when Captain Wilson was passing in the offing. As Suffrein's ships sailed so much better than his, they were off Cuddalore in the morning, and Captain Wilson arrived in the afternoon, thus providentially escaping, and bringing in the whole of the cargoes entrusted to his care, and so much wanted by the army. They had then been reduced to their last forty-five bags of paddy, and not a grain of rice to be procured. This supply rescued them from the impending famine, or the necessity of cutting their way through the enemy; and under God was the means, as all acknowledged, of the preservation of the army and the Carnatic. Captain Wilson had some stores of his own, which were greedily seized and devoured, as soon as landed. The next day he was invited to dine with the General and the Staff, and was placed at Sir Eyre Coote's right hand, and received the most cordial acknowledgments for his services. He informed the company of the seizure of his stores; they bid him prepare an account

of them, and gave him a pagoda for every bottle of wine, and for the rest in proportion, so that this successful trip produced him about a thousand pounds, and a testimony of Sir Eyre Coote's high satisfaction in the service which he had performed.

Returning to Bengal, he continued to be employed in carrying down supplies : but as these voyages include nothing interesting, I shall only note his unfortunate capture by the French, when he was going with a very valuable cargo of military stores for Sir Edward Hughes, whose ammunition had been nearly exhausted in the well known conflict with Suffrein. He was carried into Cuddalore, which had been taken by the French, and there he found the crew of the Hannibal in the same captivity. He was permitted, with other officers, to be at large on his parole, and hoped shortly to be exchanged.

Hyder Ally had at that time overrun and wasted great part of the Carnatic ; and in conjunction with the French, after taking Cuddalore, hoped to expel the English from all that territory. He had lately defeated Colonel Baily's detachment, and made them prisoners, and used every effort to get as many of the English as possible into his power, in order either to tempt them into his service, or to gratify his brutality by exposing them to a lingering death. He had bribed Suffrein with three hundred thousand rupees, to surrender up to him all his prisoners at Cuddalore ; and the order being communicated to the commander of the fort, nothing could exceed the indignation and grief which he and his officers testified at such an infamous bargain. However, as he dared not disobey the orders of his superior, he informed the gentlemen on parole of the transaction, and his necessity of delivering them up the

next day to the escort appointed to carry them to Ser-
ingapatam.

Captain Wilson no sooner received the intelligence, than he determined that very night, if possible, to attempt his escape from a captivity which appeared to him worse than death. He had observed as he walked the ramparts, the possibility of dropping down into the river; and though he neither knew the height of the wall, nor the width of the rivers which were to be crossed, before he could reach a neutral settlement, he determined to seize the moment of delay, and risk the consequences, whatever danger or difficulty might be in the way.

He communicated his resolution to a brother officer, and a Bengalese boy, his servant, who both resolved to accompany him in his flight. It was concerted between them to meet on the ramparts, just before the guard was set, as it grew dark, and silently drop down from the battlement. Before the hour appointed his companion's heart failed him. About seven o'clock, he, with his boy Tobv. softly ascended the rampart unperceived, and the Captain leaping down, uncertain of the depth, pitched on his feet: but the shock of so great a descent, about forty feet, made his chin strike against his knees, and tumbled him headlong into the river, which ran at the foot of the wall, and he dreaded least the noise of the dash into the water would discover him. He recovered himself, however, as soon as possible, and returning to the foot of the wall, where there was a dry bank, bid the boy drop down, and caught him safe in his arms.

All that part of the Tanjore country is low, and intersected with a number of rivers, branching off from

the great Coleroon : these must all be necessarily crossed. He enquired, therefore, of the boy, if he could swim ; but found he could not. This was very embarrassing ; but he resolved not to leave him behind, and therefore took him on his back, being an excellent swimmer, and carried him over. They pushed towards Porto Nuovo, about four leagues and an half from Cuddalore. They had passed three arms of the river and advanced at as great a pace as they possibly could, to make use of the night, since their hope of safety depended chiefly on the distance they could reach before the morning light. Not far from Porto Nuovo, a seapoy century challenged, Who goes there ? on which they shrunk back, and concealed themselves turning down to the river side. The river in that place was very wide, and being near the sea, the tide ran in with great rapidity. He took, however, the boy on his back, as he had done before, and bid him be sure only to hold by his hands, and cast his legs behind him : But when they came into the breakers, the boy was frightened, and clung around the Captain with his legs so fast, as almost to sink him. With difficulty he struggled with the waves, and turning back to the shore, found they must inevitably perish together, if he thus attempted to proceed. Therefore, setting the boy safe on land, he bid him go back to Doctor Mein, who would take care of him ; but the poor lad has never since been heard of, though the most diligent enquiries were made after him. As delay was death to him he plunged again into the stream, and buffeting the waves, pushed for the opposite shore ; but he found the tide running upwards so strong, that in spite of all his efforts he was carried along with the current, and constrained, at a considerable distance, to return to the same side of the river. Providentially, at the place where he landed, he discov-

ered by the moon-light, dry on the beach a canoe, which he immediately seized, and was drawing down to the river, when two black men rushed upon him, and demanded whither he was going with that boat. He seized the outrigger of the canoe as his only weapon of defence against the paddles, which they had secured, and told them he had lost his way, had urgent business to Tranquebar, and thither he must and would go : and launching with all his remaining strength the canoe into the river, he intreated them to convey him to the other side. The good-natured Indians laid down their paddles on the thwarts, and whilst he stood in the stern rowed him to the opposite shore. He returned them many thanks, having nothing else to give them, and leaping on the beach, immediately pushed forward with all his might. He found he had as great a distance to pass to the Coleroon, as he had already travelled, and therefore continued his course with full speed, the moon shining bright ; and before break of day reached this largest arm of the river, of which those which he had crossed were branches. Exhausted with the fatigue he had undergone, and dismayed with the width of this mighty stream, he stood for a moment hesitating on the brink ; but the approach of morning, and the danger behind him being so urgent, he stretched out his arms to the flood, and pressed for the shore. How long he was in crossing he cannot ascertain ; he thinks he must have slept by the way, from some confused remembrance as of a person awaking from a state of insensibility, and which, he supposes, had lasted half an hour at least. However, with the light of the morning he had reached the land, and flattered himself that all his dangers were past, and his liberty secured : when, after passing a jungle which led to the sea-side, he ascended a sand-bank to look around him. There, to his terror

and surprise, he perceived a party of Hyder's horse scouring the coast ; and being discovered by them, they galloped up to him : in a moment seized, and stript him naked, unable to fly or resist ; and tying his hands behind his back, fastened a rope to them, and thus drove him before them to the head quarters, several miles distant, under a burning sun, and covered with blisters. He supposes he must have gone that night and day, more than forty miles, besides all the rivers he had crossed. But to what efforts will not the hope of life and liberty prompt ? What sufferings and dangers will men not brave to secure them ? Yet these were but the beginning of his sorrows.

The officer at the head quarters was a Mahometan, one of Hyder's chieftains. He interrogated the poor prisoner sharply who he was, whence he came, and whither going ? Mr. Wilson gave him an ingenuous account of his escape from Cuddalore, and the reasons for it, with all the circumstances attending his flight. The moorman, with wrath, looked at him, and said, *jute bat*, " that is a lie," as no man ever yet passed the Coleroon by swimming, for if he had but dipped the tip of his fingers in it, the alligators would have seized him. The captain assured him the truth was so, and gave him such indubitable evidence of the fact, that he could no longer doubt the relation ; when lifting up his hands, he cried out, *Gouda ka Adami !* " this is God's man." So Caiaphas prophesied. He was indeed God's man. The Lord had marked him for his own, though as yet he knew him not.

He was immediately marched back naked, and blistered all over, to the former house of his prison, and in aggravated punishment for his flight, Hyder refused him

permission to join his fellow officers, his former companions, and thrust him into a dungeon among the meanest captives. Chained to a common soldier he was next day led out, almost famished, and nearly naked, to march on foot to Seringapatam, in that burning climate, about 500 miles distant. The officers beheld his forlorn condition with great concern, unable to procure him any redress; but they endeavored to alleviate his misery, by supplying him with immediate necessaries. One gave him a shirt, another a waistcoat, another stockings and shoes, so that he was once more covered and equipped for his toilsome journey. But the brutes his conductors, had no sooner marched him off to the first halting place than they again stripped him to his skin, and left him only a sorry rag to wrap round his middle.

In this wretched state, chained to another fellow sufferer, under a vertical sun, with a scanty provision of rice only, he had to travel naked and barefoot five hundred miles, insulted by the brutes; who goaded him on all the day—at night thrust into a damp unwholesome prison, crowded with other miserable objects.

On their way they were brought into Hyder's presence, and strongly urged to enlist in his service, and profess his religion, and thus obtain their liberty: to induce them to which these horrible severities were inflicted on them, and to escape these at any rate some of the poor creatures consented. But the captain rejected these offers with disdain, and though a stranger to a nobler principle, and destitute of all religion, so great a sense of honor impressed him, that he resolved to prefer death, with all its horrors, to desertion and Mahomedism.

In consequence of the dreadfulnefs of this march, exposed by day to the heat, and cooped up in a damp prison by night, without clothes, and almost without food, covered with sores, and the irons entering into his flesh, he was, in addition to all the rest of his sufferings, attacked with the flux: and how he arrived at Seringapatam alive, so weakened with disease and fatigue, is wonderful. Yet greater miseries awaited him there. Naked, diseased, half starved, he was thrust into a noisome prison, destitute of food or medicine, with one hundred and fifty three fellow-sufferers, chiefly Highlanders of Colonel Macleod's regiment, men of remarkable size and vigor. The very irons which Colonel Baily had worn were put on him, weighing thirty-two pounds; and this peculiar rigor he was informed was the punishment for his daring to attempt an escape, as well as for his resolute rejection of all the tempting offers made him. The other officers were at large, and among them was the present General Baird, so lately the avenger of their wrongs when he stormed this very city. Poor Wilson was imprisoned with the common soldiers, and chained to one of them night and day.

It is hardly possible to express the scenes of unvaried misery that for two and twenty months he suffered in this horrible place. The prison was a square, around the walls of which was a kind of barrack for the guard. In the middle was a covered place open on all sides, exposed to the wind and rain. There, without any bed but the earth, or covering but the rags wrapt round him, he was chained to a fellow-sufferer, and often so cold, that they have dug a hole in the earth, and buried themselves in it, as some defence from the chilling blasts of the night. Their whole allowance was only a pound of rice a day per man, and one rupee for forty

days, or one pice a day, less than a penny, to provide salt and fire to cook the rice. It will hardly be believed, that it was among their eager employments to collect the white ants, which pestered them in the prison, and fry them to procure a spoonful or two of their buttery substance. A state of raging hunger was never appeased by an allowance scarcely able to maintain life; and the rice so full of stones, that he could not chew, but must swallow it; and often (he said) he was afraid to thrust his own fingers in his mouth, lest he should be tempted to bite them.

The noble and athletic highlanders were among the first victims. The flux and dropfy daily diminished their numbers. Often the dead corpse was unchained from his arm in the morning, that another living sufferer might take his place, and fall by the same diseases. How his constitution could endure such sufferings is astonishing. Yet he had recovered from the flux which he carried into the prison, and for a year maintained a state of health beyond his fellows; but worn down with misery, cold, hunger and nakedness, he was attacked with the usual symptoms which had carried off so many others. His body enormously distended, his thighs as big as his waist before, and his face enormously bloated. death seemed to have seized him for his prey. But his heart was still insensible as the nether millstone. God was not in all his thoughts, and his conscience cauterised, as if made stupid by his sufferings, he was dying as the beast which perisheth. No humiliation, no prayer, no sense of sin, no recourse to a pardoning God, no care about an eternal world, he lay in a state of torpor towards every thing holy and heavenly, occupied only with the desire and hope of recovery. How he survived such accumulated misery, exhausted with famine

and disease, the unwholesome vapours of a prison thickening around him, and the iron entering into his flesh, is next to a miracle : but the days of man are numbered. He is immortal in the regions of the shadow of death, till his appointed time shall come.

Reduced now to the extremity of weakness, his chains too strait to be endured, and threatening mortification, he seemed to touch the moment of his dissolution, and was released from them to lie down and die. The soldier to whom he had been last chained had served him with great affection, whilst others who had been linked together often quarrelled, and rendered mad by their sufferings, blasphemed and aggravated each others miseries. Seeing him thus to appearance near his end, and thinking it might alleviate his pain, Sam entreated he might spend for oil, the daily pice, about three farthings, paid them, and anoint his legs, but the Captain objected, that he should then have nothing to buy firing and salt to cook the next day's provision. Sam shook his head, and said, Master, before that I fear you will be dead, and never want it. But who can tell what a day may bring forth ? He had exchanged his allowance of rice that day for a small species of gram, called ratchepier, which he eagerly devoured, and being very thirsty, he drank the liquor in which they were boiled, and this produced such an amazing evacuation, that in the course of a few hours, his legs and thighs, and body, from being bloated ready to burst, were reduced to a skeleton, and though greatly weakened, he was completely relieved ; and afterwards recommended the trial with success to many of his fellow prisoners. His irons were now replaced, though less heavy ; and being mere skin and bones, they would slip over his knees, and leave his legs at liberty.

The ravages of death had now thinned their ranks, and few remained the living monuments of Hyder Ali's cruelty and malignity : nor would these probably have conflicted with their miseries many months or days ; but the victories of Sir Evre Coote happily humbled this monster, and compelled him reluctantly to submit, as one of the conditions of peace, to the release of all the British captives. With these glad tidings, after twenty-two months spent on the verge of the grave, Mr. Law, son of the Bishop of Carlisle, arrived at Seringapatam. and to him the prison doors flew open ; but what a scene presented itself ! emaciated, naked, covered with ulcers, more than half dead, only thirty-two remained out of one hundred and fifty-three brave men, to tell the dismal tale of the sufferings of their prison-house.

Their humane and compassionate deliverer immediately provided them with clothes, dressing for their wounds, and food for their hunger : but now their mercies threatened to be more fatal to them even than their miseries. The ravenousness of their appetite could not be restrained ; and though cautioned and warned against excess, they devoured the meat provided with such keen avidity, that their stomachs, long unaccustomed to animal food, were incapable of digestion. Captain Wilson was of the number who could not bridle his cravings ; the sad effects immediately followed. He was seized that night with a violent fever, became delirious, and for a fortnight his life was despaired of. In his prison, under sufferings more than human nature seemed capable of enduring, he had struggled through, and for the most part enjoyed a state of health and strength, but now in the moment of liberty, joy, and abundance, he received a stroke more severe than any he had before

undergone. How little can we determine of the good or evil before us under the sun? He was a more wretched being surrounded by kind friends, and every humane attention, than he had been destitute, famished, covered with sores, and lying naked on the floor of a dungeon. But he who is the Lord of life and glory, had determined he should not thus perish. When all human help had failed, the great Physician who was the balm to heal the desperate, rebuked the fever, restored his understanding, and raised him up once more from the dust of death: the eternal source of mercy would not cut him off in the impenitence and hardness of his heart; he had grace in store for him, and work prepared, when the set time should come; and such work as was the farthest from every idea he had yet entertained. He was for this continued among the living, to praise him, as he doth this day; but at that time, mercies had no more effect on him than miseries. His heart was yet hardened, and he knew not the hand which healed him. The day of salvation was not yet arrived, nor the period of his chastisements closed. He returned to life and health, with all the same corrupt propensities, the same unrenewed heart, the same forgetfulness of God, and contempt of his word and commandments. No sufferings, not those of hell itself can produce a salutary change: a sinner would come out of these flames, the same as he entered them, unless the spirit of love and power changed the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, and melted the obdurate into godly sorrow, working repentance unto salvation never to be repented of.

Being now restored, and capable of accompanying his countrymen he descended the Gaults and proceeded on to Madras. Lord Macartney had forwarded a supply of cloaths to meet them, but there not being a sufficien-

cy for all, some had one thing and some another : to Mr. Wilson's share a very large military hat fell, which with a banian and pantaloons, with many a breach, made his meagre figure very much resemble a maniac. Impatient to visit his friends, he walked on from the last halting place, and the centries hardly would let him pass. He hastened to a friend, whose name was Ellis, and knocking at the door, enquired of the servants for their master and mistress. The footman stared at him, and said, they were not at home, and were shutting the door ag-ainst him, when he pressed in, rushed by them, and threw himself down on a sofa. The servants were Mahometans, who hold the insane in much reverence, and such they supposed him ; and without any violence used to remove him, Captain Wilson was permitted quietly to repose himself ; and being tired, he fell into the most profound sleep, in which state his friends on their return found him, and hardly recognized him, he was so altered. They left him thus found asleep till the evening, when the lustres were lighted, and several friends assembled, curious to hear the story of his miserable captivity. When he awoke and saw the glare of light, and the persons around him, he could scarce recover his recollection, and for a moment seemed as if he had dropped into some enchanted abode. The welcome and kind treatment of his friends, who supplied all his wants, soon restored him to his former life and spirits ; and he began to think of new service, as he had yet obtained but a scanty provision, which his long captivity had not much increased, though he received the arrears of his pay. He accordingly shipped himself as first mate in the Intelligence, Captain Penington, for Bencoolen and Batavia. In his passage through the straits of Malacca, they were surrounded with water spouts, one of which was very near, and they fired to disperse it. The roar-

ing was tremendous, and presently a torrent of rain poured on the ship, which brought down with it many fish and sea weeds, yet the water was perfectly fresh; a phenomenon singularly curious.

During this voyage the white ants and cock-roaches, with other insects, multiplied in the most prodigious manner, so that it was resolved to run the ship down from Bencoolen to Puley Bay, and lay her completely under water to get rid of the vermin. After a fortnight they pumped her dry, and the quantity destroyed of these creatures, with centipedes three or four inches long, was incredible. Bencoolen is a most unhealthy place, but Puley Bay is the region of the shadow of death; from thence none escape without the putrid fever. Perhaps the wetness of the ship added not a little to the cause of mortality. Before they left the bay, every man of the crew, who were Europeans, except Wilson, died. The Captain came down well on Christmas day, and only dined on board and returned the same night; the very next day he sickened and died. A recruit of black men was sent from Bencoolen to navigate the vessel. The very day they sailed out of the harbor, Captain Wilson, who had resisted hitherto the intemperature of the climate, and then commanded the vessel, was attacked with the fever. One Swede yet remained. He had always accounted for the death of his companions, and imputed it to their imprudence. He had confidence he should escape. He was then at the helm, going out of the harbor: the Captain, who, though ill, kept the deck, observed the ship very badly steered, and called out. The Swede quitted the wheel, and sat down on the hen-coops. The Captain himself ran to the wheel to rectify the course; storming at the man who had left the helm. He made no reply; but

how great was his surprise, when, on going up to him he found him a corpse. The ship however visited Batavia, and arrived in Bengal; and though his health continued to suffer, the Captain made a very profitable voyage.

During a year and a half he had repeated and dangerous relapses, and more than once approached the gates of death. He continued however to improve his fortune, and became himself a sharer in the vessel as well as commander. Having thus accumulated a small competence for that country, he resolved to return to England, and sit down content with what he had, and endeavor to recover his health and enjoy himself.

With this view he embarked as passenger in the same ship in which that good man, Mr. Thomas, one of the Baptist missionaries, was returning from Bengal to England. With him he had frequent disputes about religion; and being as infidel in principle as careless in conduct, he could not but grieve so gracious a minister, who observed one day to the chief mate, that he should have much more hope of converting the Lascars to Christianity, than Captain Wilson; so deeply mysterious are the ways of Providence. The things impossible to man, are possible with God; but the time was not yet.

Being arrived safe at Portsmouth, he immediately looked around him for an agreeable abode, and having soon discovered such a one at Horndean, in Hampshire, he purchased it, and determined to sit down contented with the very moderate fortune which he had brought from India, and amuse himself with gardening and the sports of the country. Being unmarried, he considered of a proper person to have the conduct of his house and

family. He had a sensible and agreeable niece, whom he particularly desired to take this care upon her. She was a truly religious woman, and when pressed by him to come and live with him, she informed him of her sentiments and the necessity of attending the worship of God at the congregation at Perusea, to which she belonged. He very carelessly observed that to him this would be no objection; he should not disturb her about her religion; and provided, she did not trouble him with it, he should leave her to herself.

About two years he continued to live at Horndean, in the same careless unconcern about eternal things, decent in his conduct, and perfectly sober; amused with his garden, the sports, and company around him; but an utter stranger to the principles of the gospel, as unacquainted with the power of them.

Providentially at this time, a book of Major Burn's, containing dialogues on the Christian's Warfare fell into his hands. A religious book, written by a military man, excited his curiosity, and fixed his attention. As he read, the scales seemed to fall from his eyes, and a new system of divine truth unfolded itself to his view, of which, before he had not the least idea. He had heard nothing like it in India; and his parish church, he attended at home, had furnished him with no such doctrines, as Major Burn suggested; at least his inattention had never perceived any thing resembling what he now read, as constituting the essence of a Christian's faith and practice.

Religion had been a subject agreed to be waved with his niece; but he could not now help enquiring, if she knew any person in this country who held the same sen-

timents as the Major inculcated. She soon resolved him, that he would find at Portsea many zealous advocates for them, and pressed him to go with her and hear the Rev. Mr. Griffin, the next Sabbath-day. He accordingly drove her down to Portsea, from whence he was only nine miles distant, and was delighted to find in Mr. Griffin's preaching the perfect correspondence with those evangelical sentiments which he had read with so much pleasure, and which the discourse of this excellent man fixed with deeper impression on his mind. From that day forward he began to read the Scriptures with great diligence and increasing sensibility of their importance. He became a constant attendant on the gospel, and formed a cordial friendship with the worthy young minister, whose church he frequented, and was soon admitted as a member. His regular visits there, and the change produced on himself, were too visible not to be noticed by his former acquaintance. It was soon rumored how altered a man Mr. Wilson had become, and the usual reproach of Methodism immediately attached to him.

In this state of spiritual improvement he continued about two years—separating himself from the vain and sinful world, and cordially uniting with the people of God. His garden continued his amusement and employment, whilst the word of God, and other books, tending to edification, were his daily delight and his counsellors. His life now proceeded in the same placid uniform tenor, till one day, after returning from Portsea, he was walking in his garden, and meditated on the faith of Abraham, in leaving his country and friends at the call of God, not knowing whither he went—this had been the subject of the sermon which Mr. Griffin had that day preached. On reviewing the circumstan-

ees of the Patriarch, he was much affected with the wonders wrought by faith, recorded in the 11th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, and admired the devotedness, and self-denial of the worthies there recorded. As he mused on the nature and evidence of the faith there described, *as the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, he began to question himself on the reality of his own; and felt a rising fear in his mind, lest he should have deceived himself by placing doctrinal opinion, in the stead of divine conviction of the truth. He asked himself, if called in Providence to suffer or to serve like these, whether he could as readily give up all for Christ, and go forth at the Divine bidding.

The impression arising from these reflections fixed deeply on his heart for several weeks, and his mind underwent many harrassing fears and doubts on the subject; till one day happening to take up the Evangelical Magazine, the first subject which caught his eye and attention was the account of the institution of the *London Missionary Society*, and of their noble design to convey the gospel, if possible, to the Islands of the Pacific Ocean. The thought immediately forcibly struck his mind, “if you are wanted to command the expedition, have you faith to sacrifice all the comforts around you, and freely devoting yourself to the service, could you embark once more on the deep, not to increase your substance, but to seek the souls redeemed by the blood of the Lamb?” He felt that moment he could do it with pleasure: he perceived his faith was up to the sacrifice: he read the chapter over with delight, and was sure he could, if called, give himself up to God.

He had enjoyed some happy hours in these meditations. They were the frequent subject of his thoughts:

when one day a series of new ideas rose up in his mind, to which he had been hitherto a stranger. He had hardly during all the years of service on the sea ever known what fear was : he had been unaffected by the storms which he had encountered and never thought of the perils of the deep ; but now the dangers and difficulties to which such an enterprise must expose him rose up tremendous to his view, and he began to reason on the folly of quitting his present comfortable abode, for a life so very different ; and determined to try to banish the idea from his mind. It followed him however in spite of all his efforts. Fearing to trust his own judgment, he resolved to communicate his sensations to some of his serious and judicious friends—state to them the feelings of his mind, and have their advice on the subject.

The general voice, on the view of his circumstances, rather discouraged his entertaining any farther thoughts of the matter. Though they highly approved the mission, and honored his zeal in desiring to promote so glorious a cause, they did not see his call clear to quit his present station, and persuaded him to abandon the idea.

His mind, however, rested not at ease. He was conscious he ought not to move but on some evident call of necessity, that he must see the path of duty clear, before he quitted the comfortable settlement he enjoyed ; and though his heart was greatly drawn out in prayer for the glorious object of the mission, he resolved to wait awhile the leadings of Providence, without entirely renouncing his purposes of service, if required.

A general meeting of the ministers of the gospel being convened at Salisbury, to consider the subject of

the intended mission, and to promote its accomplishment, he determined to accompany his worthy pastor, Mr. Griffin, thither, and hear what should be advanced on the occasion. There also he mentioned to some of the brethren the impression which rested on his mind ; but they rather, in general, damped than encouraged his sensations on the subject ; and though they zealously favored the missionary attempt, they hardly thought his services would be necessary.

He had now probably dropped all further thought of the matter, if the first general missionary meeting had not summoned up Mr. Griffin, with many others, to town, in order to consult what steps were proper to be pursued on the commencement of so great an undertaking. The Captain resolved to be of the party, and to see and hear for himself, what was the object intended, and the means proposed for carrying the mission into effect.

As the thing was evidently of the Lord, he came with a mind prepared for the work in the eternal counsels appointed him to fulfil. He listened with serious attention to the discourse delivered at the Castle and Falcon, to the body of the society, wherein I expressed my confidence that however difficult the work might appear, God would provide instruments for the execution of his own purposes, that the means would never be wanting if we zealously set our shoulders to the yoke, and considered the glory of the object, and the urgency of the call. He attended next day at Spa fields, and heard the first Discourse, since published, enforcing our duty, describing the objects, and suggesting the steps necessary for the execution. These met his full approbation, and contributed to decide his mind on the sub-

ject. He desired Mr. Griffin to call upon me, and appoint an interview. Mr. Griffin described the man, and his conversation, his situation, ability, and zeal. My very heart leaped with joy at the proposal, and I was filled with hope, that God, in different places, was raising up men unknown to each other, for the accomplishment of his own purposes, towards the heathen. I begged to see him without delay, and we met next morning, when, after some conference concerning the mission, with great modesty and diffidence, but with a decided purpose, he intimated, that if the Society could not find a better conductor, which he wished and hoped they might, the service should not be impeded for lack of nautical knowledge, and he was ready, without other reward than the satisfaction resulting from the service, to devote himself to the work, with whatever inconvenience to himself it might be attended. He gave me an account of the dealings of God with him hitherto, which I have above detailed, and expressed a sense of the obligations he was under to our precious Lord to dedicate himself to this service, as he said he should never forgive himself if he fell back when help was wanted.

So singular a provision made, for what seemed of all other things the most difficult to be obtained at the commencement of such an undertaking, appeared to me evidently the finger of God. Having communicated the proposal to the directors, two of them were appointed as a committee to converse with Captain Wilson on the subject. They were equally charmed with his modesty, ability, zeal, and devotedness of heart, and concurred, that nothing could tend more powerfully to the accomplishing our designs, than having such a man to command the vessel that should convey the missionaries to the place of their destination. The offer was

embraced with delight by the directors, and contributed in a very especial manner to animate our confidence, that God would provide all other necessary means, and quickened us to execute the work without delay.

The Captain being presented to the directors, confirmed the report which had been made ; and though he hoped we might yet find an abler commander, and in that case he might be excused, and his heart be at rest, yet he pledged himself, if we could not, to do his best for the mission ; and that, at whatever time he should be called into the service, he would come up, and prepare for the voyage. At the end of the week, when the society broke up, he retired to his house in the country, leaving the deepest impression upon every man who conversed with him, that never did a person appear more eminently qualified for the discharge of this service than the man so providentially provided for us.

Some months elapsed in the preparatory steps, in seeking out, and examining missionaries, providing funds, and weighing the properest means of carrying the purposed mission into effect. After long and ample discussion, it was resolved, that the attempt should be made in a ship belonging to the society, sufficient to carry thirty missionaries ; and that Captain James Wilson be requested to undertake the command. This resolution was accordingly communicated to him, and though he had met many causes to damp his zeal and deter him from the service, he continued fixed in his purpose and his correspondence breathed a spirit so truly noble, that it was impossible not to congratulate each other on such an acquisition.

The mission being now in great forwardness, and a second general meeting having confirmed all our former resolutions, the Captain was desired to come up, which he did, and took an active part in the preparations—Not less than seven or eight times did he go up and down at his own expense; sought out and purchased a proper vessel—forwarded every thing in his department—engaged the mariners—and settled all his own affairs for so long an absence. He sold his house, fixed his niece in London, and cheerfully embarked with the missionaries in that long and perilous navigation, which he has so happily accomplished.

Through the whole of his eventful story, we discover a beautiful and admirable developement of the leadings of God's providence. Who would have looked for a commander of a Christian mission, in an impious and infidel sailor, chained in a prison at Seringapatam? Who would have expected from the man, who returned from India, contradicting and blaspheming, the faithful leader on the quarterdeck, in the midst of prayer and praise, carrying the everlasting Gospel to the isles of the Pacific Ocean? The issue is before the public—and no man who reads the Missionary Voyage can hesitate to confirm the exclamation of the Moorman—THIS IS GOD'S MAN.

A Fragment taken from the first volume, to compleat the number of pages mentioned in the proposals.

CHAPTER ON THE PERSECUTIONS WHICH CHRIST-
IANS SUFFERED DURING THE FIRST AND SEC-
OND CENTURIES.

THE ingenious Pliny had been appointed by Trajan to the government of Bythinia ; and in the exercise of his office as proconsul, the Christians, against whom the severity of preceding edicts evidently subsisted, were brought before his tribunal. Not having had occasion to be present at any such examinations before, the multitude of the criminals, and the severity of the laws against them, seem to have greatly struck him ; and caused him to hesitate how far he ought to carry them into execution, without consulting first the Emperor himself, who, I think, had put him on the pursuit ; having probably heard of the rapid progress of Christianity, and imbibed all the prejudices against it, which the misrepresentations of its enemies ; the contempt of the wise ; the craft of the priesthood ; and the general odium of all pagan idolaters, could not but have propagated. A translation of the letter itself will throw more light upon the state of the Church, than perhaps any other monument of antiquity, which has reached us. Of the genuineness of the letters of Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp, there are doubts : though perhaps unfounded ; of the letters of Pliny and Trajan, I never heard any entertained ; and being the testimony of an enemy, they afford the most irrefragable

proof. We may safely conclude Bythinia was not singular for the number of converts, or the spirit of persecution ; and if such means as the philosophic Pliny employed against Christianity, were only repeated through the governments of Asia, the number of victims may easily be conceived.

A. D. 107. " C. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN,
wishes health.

" SIRE,

It is usual with me to consult you in every matter wherein I am in doubt, and to submit to your determination ; for who better than yourself can direct me when I hesitate, or instruct me where uninformed ? Till now I never had occasion to be present at any criminal process against the Christians : I am ignorant therefore to what extent it is usual to inflict punishment, or urge prosecution. I have much hesitated also, whether there should not be some distinction made between the young and old ; and in the application of the torture, whether there should not be a difference between the robust and the delicate—whether pardon should not be offered to penitence ; or whether an openly professing Christian shall be allowed to retract, in order to escape punishment ; whether the profession itself is to be regarded as a crime, however innocent in other respects the professor may be ; or whether the crimes attached to the name, must be proved, before they are liable to suffer,

" In the interval, my method with the Christians who have been impeached as such, has been this : I interrogated them, are you Christians ? If they avowed it, I asked the same question a second and a third time,

threatening them with the punishment decreed by the law : if they still persisted, I ordered them to be executed on the spot ; for, whatever their profession of religion might be, I had not the least doubt that such perverseness, and inflexible obstinacy, certainly ought to be punished.

“ There were others infected with this madness, who, being Roman citizens, I adjudged to be transported to Rome for your immediate cognizance.

“ In the discussion of this matter, accusations multiplying, a diversity of cases occurred. A schedule of names was sent me by an unknown accuser ; but when I cited the persons, many denied the fact, that they were, or ever had been Christians : and repeating after me the usual formula, addressed the Gods, and offered supplications with wine and frankincense to your image, which, with the statues of other deities, I had ordered to be produced, adding their maledictions of Christ, to which no real Christian, I am assured, by any torments could be compelled. These therefore I thought proper to discharge.

“ Others named by the informer, at first acknowledged themselves Christians and then denied it ; pretending, that though they had been such, they had renounced the profession, some for three years, others for a longer time, and a few for more than twenty. All these adored your image and the statues of the Gods, and at the same time called Christ an accursed object.

“ From their affirmations I learned, that the sum of all their offence, call it fault or error, was, that on a day fixed they used to assemble before sunrise, and sing to.

gether in alternate responses hymns to Christ, as a deity ; binding themselves by the solemn engagements of an oath, not to commit any manner of wickedness ; to be guilty neither of theft, nor robbery, nor adultery : never to break a promise nor keep back a deposit, when called upon. This service being concluded, it was their custom to separate, and meet together again for a repast, promiscuous indeed, and without any distinction of rank or sexes, but perfectly harmless : and even from this they had desisted, since the publication of my edict, forbidding, according to your orders all clubs and associations.

“ For farther information, I thought it necessary, in order to come at the truth, to put two damsels, who were called deaconesses, to the torture ; but I could extort nothing from them but the acknowledgment of a superstition, depraved as immoderate ; and therefore, desisting from farther investigation, I hastened to consult you ; for, indeed, the matter appeared to me deserving the most attentive consideration, especially in the view of the immense numbers of those who are involved in this dangerous predicament ; for informations are already brought against multitudes of all ages, of all orders, and of both sexes ; and more will be impeached, for the contagion of this superstition has not only widely spread over the cities and villages, but reached even the farm-houses. I am of opinion, however, that it may yet be stopped and corrected ; for it is evident that the temples, which I found nearly deserted, begin to be frequented ; and the sacred solemnities, that for a long while had been suspended, are come again into practice : so that now there is a brisk sale of victims for sacrifices, where before there scarcely could be found a purchaser. From whence I cannot but conclude, that

the bulk of the people may be reclaimed, if impunity be allowed to repentance."

The reply of Trajan to Pliny, I shall subjoin, as casting a fuller light upon the subject, and enabling us from both, to form very clear views of the state of the Christian Church at that time.

TRAJAN TO PLINY.

"MY DEAR PLINY,

"You have certainly followed the right track, in the discussion of the causes, relative to the impeachment of the Christians. No certain rule can be laid down, invariably to be adhered to in all cases. They are not to be hunted up by informers, but if impeached and convicted, let them be executed : only with this restriction that if any person deny that he is a Christian, and demonstrate it by offering supplication to our Gods, however suspicious his conduct may have been before, his penitence shall secure his pardon. But unless every information has the accuser's name annexed, whatever be the crime charged, it is not to be regarded ; as it would be a precedent of the worst sort, and totally contrary to the maxims of my government."

These letters appear to give a wonderful complete view of the state of Christianity, and the dreadful persecutions to which the faithful were exposed. For I apprehend the character of these witnesses stands so high with our modern infidel philosophers, that we shall not be accused of bringing a partial evidence when we produce Trajan and his proconsul : and that the conclusion is fair and indisputable, that under other emperors and

other governors the Christians would not meet with more liberal treatment.

1. In the first place, it is evident, by the laws then in force, that it was a *capital crime* for any man to be a Christian; and that nothing else was necessary for his instant execution, than his own confession; or conviction by evidence of the fact; or even his refusal to commit an act of idolatry when accused, in order to his exculpation.

2. It is as clear that the humane Trajan and the philosophic Pliny appear not to entertain a doubt of the propriety of the law, or the wisdom and justice of executing it in all its fulness. Pliny confesses he had ordered such capital punishment to be inflicted on *many*; chargeable with no crime, but their profession of Christianity; and the Emperor confirms the justice of the sentence, and enjoins the continuance of such executions, without exception in favor of any, who did not apostatize, curse the Lord Christ, and worship the idols of Paganism.

3. After the most exact enquiries, even from the apostate Christians themselves, without a discordant voice or suspicion of misrepresentation, never was a testimony so noble, and unequivocal, given to the excellence of the Christian character; of their piety, purity, and peaceable conduct; their happy communion with each other; and the innocence and exemplariness of these lives before all men. So that by the confession of their apostates themselves, no man could belong to this holy community, whose outward walk and conversation did not adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. And all this is confirmed in the strongest manner by the very means used to extort a different representation,

It is horrible to report such scandalous perversion of the sacred name of justice ! even delicate women are put to the torture, in order to try if their weakness will not betray them into accusations of their brethren. But not a word, not a charge can be extorted, capable of bearing the semblance of evil or crime. To worship Christ their God : to meet for praise and prayer, and mutual instruction ; to form engagements to abstain from every evil word and work ; to be examples and reprovers of that wicked and adulterous generation ; to celebrate the sacred mysteries of their faith in the participation of the supper of the Lord ; and the repast of Christian fellowship, which attended it—these are the *depraved superstition*, the *execrable crimes*, which nothing but a Christian's blood can expiate. I feel a *holy exultation*, whilst I record such indisputable evidence of transcendent excellence, and such martyrs for Christianity.—There must be something divine in that doctrine, even our enemies being judges, that can enable men thus to live, and thus to die. I feel a *sacred horror*, whilst I behold such characters as Pliny and Trajan embruing their hands in innocent blood, and decreeing such atrocious judgments against persons so amiable and just, even by their own acknowledgments.

4. I would remark the evidence of the singular peaceableness of the Christians, and their great care to give no offence, but to submit even to the most unjust requisitions. Their immense numbers might have engaged them to stand on their defence, supposing, what cannot be reasonably questioned, Pliny's own representation. Persons of all ranks, of every age and sex, had been converted to Christianity. The body was so vast, as to leave the pagan temples a desert, and their priests solitary. Scarce a victim was ever brought, or a sacred

solemnity observed, through the paucity of worshippers. The defection from paganism must have been wonderfully general and striking, which could have produced such effects. But the Christians neither abused their power to resist government; nor acted with the less modesty in their worship; careful not to bring down upon themselves unnecessary sufferings. They knew the edicts against them, and assembled, to avoid offence, before break of day in their several congregations, at the houses of the faithful. And when Pliny made a fresh promulgation of Trajan's bloody edicts, they for a while yielded to the storm, and desisted even from their love-feasts and general communion, if not from congregational worship.

5. I may add, that a more unequivocal evidence cannot be given of the Godhead of Christ, as universally admitted in the first ages of the Church. The heathen, who knew the import of singing hymns to their deities, could not but regard the person to whom such hymns were addressed, as really and truly God in their estimation. And the contrast of the Christian worship was not stronger, respecting the object of their devotion, than the manners of the men who offered it. They surely knew the import of their own praises and prayers. Could they have adored a man, they would not have found such reluctance to cast a pinch of frankincense on the altar before the image of Trajan, in order to save themselves from torments and death, in all its most tremendous forms. Our modern deistical and socinian Christians would have been less squeamish. But these dared not to deny the only Lord God, even our Lord Jesus Christ. And whom they worshipped with their lips as confessors, they glorified with their deaths as martyrs.

6. It is awful to consider the test to which the Christians were brought, and the fearful evidence which appeared, how many had assumed the name of Christian, and deserted paganism, who had never drank into the spirit of vital Christianity : and therefore, when persecution for the word's sake arose, they fell away from their profession, and made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. Though the martyrs were many, the apostates were more. That the martyrs were numerous, the declarations of Pliny, what *he had done* ; and the orders of Trajan, what *he should do*, can leave no manner of doubt. And we have conclusive evidence of the power of God in supporting his people under every suffering and terror, in the very camels who were tortured. Death had been a less evil for these than the rack. The suffering there had been momentary. If the feeble sex set so noble an example, we may be assured, there would not be wanting others, who would affront death and every danger, rather than submit to these tyrannical orders, and involve their souls in this fearful criminality : Could the sacred pastors of the flock, who had preached so often and so powerfully Jesus Christ, and him crucified, call that Jesus accursed ? Incense a living worm, and worship a stock or a stone ? How much preferable were prisons, and death to such an execrable requisition ? Were there not multitudes of the flock who would follow them in the bloody sacrifice ? Almost incredible to modern vulgar Christianity, as this may be, we see such things have been, and whenever a similar state of the world shall bring again the fiery trial, it will be found that the power of the Holy Ghost hath not forsaken the earth, but that there are still some, many, ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.

7. How perfectly similar are the philosophical ideas of Christianity in every age? In their view it was a kind of madness—a fanatic contagion that had spread chiefly among the populace—an overstrained affectation of religion, and being righteous overmuch—an imbecillity and depravity of the human understanding—a worship as absurd in its object as superstitious in the devotion and the preciseness of its professors. Read Pliny, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, and remark how exactly coincident their views are of Christianity! And I am greatly mistaken in my knowledge of human nature, if in similar circumstances the modern infidel would not be as bitter a persecutor as the antient. With all their notions of candor and humanity, we see in Pliny and Trajan, that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. They must hate and despise the Gospel and its professors: and whenever power is in the hands of oppressors, their pretended philanthropy will not hesitate to shed a Christian's blood.



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A FRAGMENT.

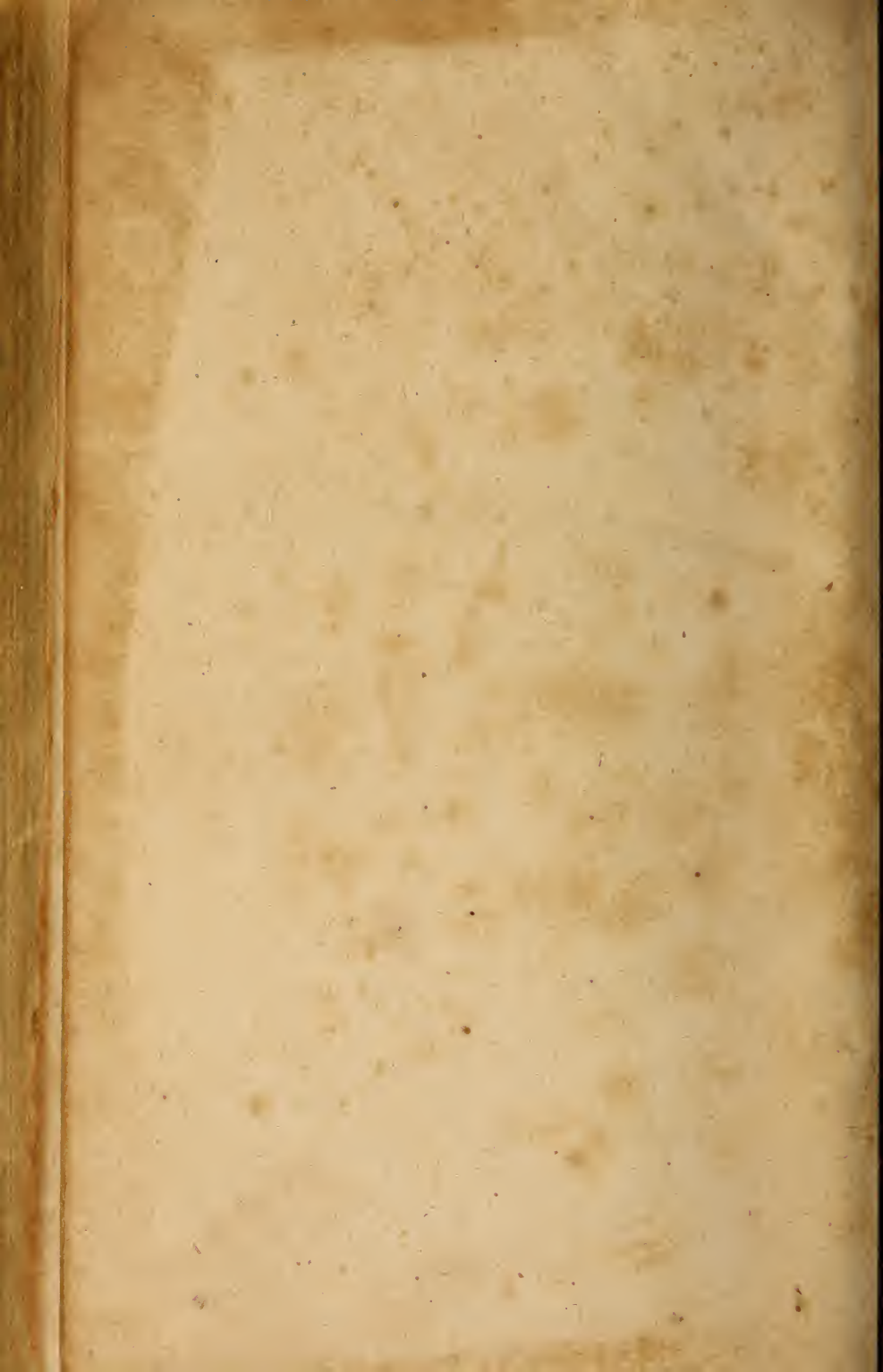
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ERRATA.

The Candid Reader is requested to make the following corrections.

	PAGE	LINE	
For <i>atrofity</i> ,	42	11	from the bottom, read <i>atrocicy</i> .
<i>cordinal</i> ,	80	do.	- - - <i>cordial</i> .
<i>scirpture</i> ,	do.	5	top, - <i>scripture</i> .
<i>establifhent</i> ,	109	6	- - - <i>establifhment</i> .
<i>cotinued</i> ,	do.	10	- - - <i>continued</i> .
<i>abftrucer</i> ,	170	13	- bottom, - <i>obftrufcr</i> .
<i>feemingly</i> ,	183	7	- top, - <i>feemly</i> .
<i>greater</i> ,	194	5	- - - <i>great</i> .
<i>barrior</i> ,	234	11	- - - <i>barrier</i> .
<i>necefily</i> ,	235	2	- - - <i>neceffity</i> .
<i>compagna</i> ,	240	4	- - - <i>campagna</i> .
<i>Gofple</i> ,	290	16	- bottom, - <i>Gofpel</i> .
	358	8	top, insert <i>been</i> before <i>feen</i> .
<i>turpid</i> ,	372	9	- - - <i>turbid</i> .
<i>bath</i> ,	374	5	- - - <i>have</i> .
<i>difficully</i> ,	do.	16	- bottom, - <i>difficultly</i> .
<i>were</i> ,	380	18	- - - <i>where</i> .
<i>fon</i> ,	387	12	top, - <i>sons</i> .
<i>wrags</i> ,	405	6	bottom, in some of the copies <i>rags</i> .

A few other literal mistakes of lefs confideration, the reader will candidly overlook.





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